

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND
SOCIAL REALITIES



TRANSACTIONS OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY

General Editor : S. C. DUBE

Social Sciences and Social Realities

*Social Sciences
and
Social Realities*

Role of the Social Sciences
in Contemporary India

Indian Institute of Advanced Study
Simla

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Preface

This volume brings together some of the papers presented and discussed at a seminar on "Social Sciences and Social Realities : Role of the Social Sciences in Contemporary India" organized by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study. They represent the thinking of some of the leading practitioners of social science disciplines on the state of their art as well as their search for objectives. Vital issues concerning the social responsibility of the social scientist and the relevance of his research for contemporary India have been discussed both explicitly and implicitly in these essays. Some of them have deliberately chosen a wide canvass and have talked about social science as a unified field ; others have narrowed their focus to their individual academic specialities. Together they reflect the issues and concerns of Indian social science today and contribute significantly to the ongoing debate on a redefinition of its goals and desired modifications in its conceptual and methodological apparatus. Even if there is a wide divergence of opinion in the different essays and the volume does not offer any definitive answers, the endeavour is not without significance. It reflects the prevailing mood in the social sciences and represents honest heart-searching. The ideas that emerge in the different essays, I hope, will provide a framework for further reflection.

The Institute is grateful to the Indian Council of Social Science Research for permission to use some of the studies commissioned by it, in another context, for discussion in the Simla seminar and also to include them in this volume. In a sense the seminar as well as its outcome, in the shape of this volume, may be considered a joint venture of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study and the Indian Council of Social Science Research. In this connection the friendly cooperation of the Council's dynamic Member-Secretary, Mr. J. P. Naik, is gratefully acknowledged.

The paper on *Indian Sociology : Historical Development and Present Problems* by Professor Ramkrishna Mukherjee was not presented and discussed at the seminar. In view of its importance for the theme of this volume, we decided on its inclusion by special permission of the author. It originally appeared in the *Sociological Bulletin*

(Volume XXII, No. 1) and we are thankful to the Indian Sociological Society for their permission to reprint it.

In selecting the essays for inclusion in this volume, I had the benefit of the editorial advice of Professor T. N. Madan. He also kindly agreed to prepare a brief and succinct "General Resume" of the discussions. His help was invaluable.

Finally, I wish to make a special mention of Mr. Shyamji Dubey, Manager of Delhi University Press, who brought out this book in a remarkably short period of time. Not many printers can match his energy and concern for quality. Mr. N. C. Chatterjee, presently with the Indian Council of Historical Research, voluntarily agreed to see the book through the press. His assistance is particularly to be commended because he helped us out at a time when our publications schedule was crowded. This was done out of a sense of loyalty for the Institute which he had served with devotion.

I hope this volume will make some contribution to the dialogue on the role and responsibility of the social sciences in changing India.

S. C. Dube
Director

16 March 1976

Framework and Perspectives

Keynote Address

I N THE last twenty-five years there has been a sizable expansion of social science activity in India. Judged in quantitative terms alone, the growth of the social sciences is truly impressive. Several hundred new university and college departments have been set up in diverse fields of the social sciences, and they are brimming with students. Research institutions of a wide variety—unidisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary—have been set up by the score. Most of these institutions have a narrow and specialized focus and are geared to programmes with well-defined objectives, but some of them are intended generally to promote research of high quality and thus contribute to the growth of scholarship in the country. In government as well as in industry research, consultative, and advisory positions have been added on an unprecedented scale.

This trend has been regarded by many as well-merited recognition of the importance, and of the potential role, of the social sciences. This expansion, however, has not been universally welcomed even in the community of social scientists, and for some good reasons. Quantitative expansion has involved, in some measure, the dilution of quality. Some critics rightly question the performance capability of the social sciences in their present state of underdevelopment, and doubt if they can match with actual performance the promises that they have so hastily and often unjudiciously made. Social science research is lagging behind; it has not been able to cope with the changing dimensions and magnitude of the social situation it seeks to analyze, hopefully with a view to offering guidance in its effective handling and management.

During the last five years the social sciences appear to have developed a crisis of conscience. Their unease is manifesting itself in many forms. They have rejected the easy rationalizations and glib justifications of their significance. They are no longer as sure of their capabilities as they were a decade back. Their ambitious claims have been replaced by self-deprecating criticism. Doubts are being raised about the relevance of a wide range of endeavour that constitutes the corpus of social science research in India today and the efficacy and adequacy of the methodological tools employed in

far are being questioned. The elitists among us lash out with ferocity at much of the social science activity and at almost all the research organizations set up recently. They paint the contemporary social science scene in such gloomy colours that one begins to wonder if all the effort that has gone into promoting the social sciences has been an exercise in futility. Serious heart-searching from time to time is healthy and necessary, but it should not be allowed to develop into a morbid preoccupation that inhibits all initiatives. It is good that we in the social sciences are making a serious effort to redefine our goals in the fast changing contexts of contemporary life, but it would be uncharitable to deny the gains that we have registered. Obviously the social sciences cannot wait until the recipe for perfection is found. Our strategy should be to build self-correctives into the growth processes of the social sciences.

The major weaknesses of Indian social science are all too well-known. Both in teaching as well as research we place excessive reliance on foreign models. The so-called international styles of scholarship, rather than contemporary national relevance, determine the content of our university curricula as well as the themes and the models of our research. In general we fail to ask the right questions, and all too willingly accept the tyranny of established concepts. Our efforts reflect the absence of conceptual innovativeness and methodological rigour. In order to equal or excel our counterparts abroad in technical virtuosity we willingly undergo the torture of techniques and often end up murdering by methodology, both research problems and their insightful analyses. There is a general lack of social concern and responsibility, and too much concentration on the trite and the trivial. Much of our effort is focused on segmental perfection which contributes little towards the emergence of a valid generalized picture. Our theoretical constraints are largely vacuous and we are timid in responding to the challenges of the day.

This unflattering picture is, regrettably, true, but the very fact that we are aware of our weaknesses is a healthy sign. The situation may or may not be as terrible as some of us make out: it is certainly not beyond repair. There is unmistakable evidence of the emergence of a series of healthy trends and of bold initiatives that promise results. Slogans do little to solve problems, nor does hard-hitting criticism necessarily build institutions. It is time we approach our task with a healthy awareness of our limitations and our potentialities, and set about the business of preparing such blueprints for action as would avoid the now recognized pitfalls and would tap the latent and often unsuspected reserves of creativity in the country.

There have been visible shifts in the roles that the social sciences have given to themselves at different times. There was a time when they were content with a largely *descriptive* role: outlining the morphology of societies and of cultures was viewed as an adequate function for them. Important as this function is, some social scientists did not find it sufficiently challenging and rewarding. They moved on to an *explanatory* role which combined description with analysis and led to meaningful explanations. The social scientist, thus, did not remain a mere chronicler of the social scene but became an analyst. Many were—and still are—content with this role but, to some, even this was not entirely satisfactory. They wanted to go beyond analysis—from *explanation to management*. Impressive claims were made for social engineering as an applied arm of the academic social sciences. The range of the *engineering* function could be viewed either narrowly, such as in the forecasting of changes in consumer

behaviour, or broadly to encompass far-reaching changes in the multiplex relationships in society and in the fabric of culture in order to ensure the realization of pre-set social objectives.

The debate regarding the proper role of the social sciences and, by implication, of its practitioners, now centres round two functions which are neither exclusive nor contradictory. Some social scientists claim that their job is to provide critical understanding of the society and of its processes. Their analyses bring to light the operation of the major forces that generate certain central tendencies. They highlight the direction in which the society is moving, and examine also the paradoxes and contradictions that underlie this movement. As social analysts they are concerned with formulating problems, with developing investigational procedures, and with carrying out studies on themes that they consider important. Their analyses may include critical treatment of the intended and unintended consequences of social policies, and may even come up with some meaningful social criticism.

The social engineering approach takes over at this point. It is not content with the *what is* type of social science analysis, it goes on to say what the social order *should be*. It has to take upon itself the task of normative thinking in order to be able to set the goals for the society. The process does not end here, for social engineering must chart alternative courses of action to ensure the movement of society from what it is to what it *should be*. Social engineering thus involves both the determination of destinations and the provision of navigational aids. It also implies watching out for disincentives, dysfunctions, and undesired and unintended consequences.

The two approaches do not really contradict each other. A critical understanding of the society and its processes is in any case essential and may be viewed as a precondition to successful social engineering. The latter operates under certain obvious limitations, and cannot recommend a definite course of action with as much certainty and self-assurance as a real-life engineer does in respect of what he has to build. The social sciences cannot provide *the* answer: they can, at best, suggest policy alternatives with comments on the manifest and latent implications of each. I unhesitatingly endorse the view of Max Millikan, his background notwithstanding, that the social sciences can only extend the policy-maker's capacity for judgement but cannot provide him with answers. But even this limited function has far-reaching uses. Results of social science research fed into the policy-making process, can illuminate areas of darkness; they can provide new perspectives to the policy-maker to enable him to pick up the right options and to make the right choices. Scientific knowledge can be a major factor in shaping policy, but it is well to remember that it can never be treated as the only factor or, in many situations, even as the dominant factor. Let us also not forget that, in matters of policy choice, even the practitioners of the same discipline may not speak with one voice. The findings of science rarely dictate a single choice.

In thinking of the social sciences one often associates them with objectivity and value neutrality. These two attributes are not complementary and it is unfortunate that they are so often linked together. Objectivity is the very soul of social science research. Take away objectivity, and the social sciences will be reduced to some kind of mythology: they will become ideological tools, either of unscrupulous criticism or of uncritical support. The objectivity of social research must be safeguarded at all costs. Value neutrality is a category apart, and I find it extremely difficult to visualize

a social science that is or can be entirely value free. Only a dehumanized social science can adopt a value-neutral posture towards hunger, misery, and impoverishment. In the developing countries, where the need is to wage a relentless war against poverty and to elevate the common people to certain basic standards of human dignity, no social scientist with a wide-awake conscience can afford this luxury. Of course, he is free to take his expertise to the marketplace and make it available to the highest bidder; the choice is entirely his own, and he can keep the rewards. The test of the social worth of his contributions will not, in the final analysis, be in the financial benefits that it brings, but in its success in alleviating human misery and suffering. Society must come before the self.

The twin interests of nation-building and economic development are likely to make increasing demands on the time and the expertise of the social scientist. If he is to respond creatively to this challenge, he will have to assume several roles.

His primary function will be to inform the policy-maker and the public. The policy-maker must move from an adequately understood position, forewarned, hopefully, about the possible consequences of the available policy alternatives. Informed public opinion is likely to respond responsibly to policy initiatives.

Second, at least some social scientists must develop a capacity to assume multiple roles and become ambidexterous. At different stages they may be called upon to function as resource persons (i.e. providers of urgently needed information), as consultants and advisers, or as policy planners. For effective functioning in these roles, expertise in a limited field alone will not be enough; they will require, in addition, sensitivities of different kinds. They must have a political sense, must understand the constraints of the socio-political milieu, and must predict the limitations and potential of the instruments available to them for operationalizing their strategy. It is also essential for them to have some analytical understanding of the policy-making process.

Third, they could usefully perform the function of evaluation; especially where qualitative evaluation is needed along with sophisticated quantitative evaluation, and where the intangibles and imponderables of human motivations have to be studied in depth.

Fourth, he has the all-important function of social criticism. Where policies are going wrong and are likely to create more problems than they solve, it is his duty to speak out. By this he may annoy some of those in power, but he will have discharged a social trust that he must voluntarily adopt. An act of courage such as this must become for him a compulsive act of conscience.

All this would necessitate imagination, organization, and discipline on the part of the social scientist. What he offers should be reliable and valid social science, covering relevant themes—themes that are purposively chosen, sensitively investigated, and meaningfully analyzed. Macro profiles must emerge along with micro studies. Events move faster than social science research; timely availability of research findings is essential if they have to flow into the policy-making process. The diffusion of this knowledge poses complex problems: the policy-maker and the public require an idiom different from the one in which the social scientist habitually writes. Innovative handling of this communication gap is a must if social science findings are to influence policy-making.

Whichever way we look at the problem, we need first class social science—conceptually adequate, methodologically sound, and socially relevant. This requires initiative on several fronts. Conceptual adequacy and methodological soundness raise many problems: of the restructuring of the prevailing system of social science education; of the provision of infra-structure and research facilities; and of introducing imaginative programmes of training in the method and techniques of research. The problem of social relevance poses more baffling questions: What are the criteria of relevance? Who is to determine them? What is the guarantee that the consensus of a majority will prove right and not the view of a dissident minority?

Thus, we come to the two most seminal problems that puzzle Indian social science today: **institution-building and the determination of research priorities.**

In respect of institution-building, there are those who would concentrate on the building only of Taj Mahals. (I refer to it in the context of its unmatched grace and perfection, not in the context of its association of the dead and the dying.) And, of course, there are those who vote for good, sound, and functional utility flats. There is room for both. Some small institutions can and should be built around scholars of proven merit, in full realization of the possibility that some of them may click and that others may prove non-starters. The risk is worth taking; the gains to be had from those which emerge as centres of excellence will offset the losses on those that do not make the grade. But this alone will not do. The utility flats too will need attention, for it is from them that the “peaks of excellence” will ultimately have to draw their sustenance. No useful purpose is served by criticizing in intemperate language the lack of achievement on the part of those university departments and other research establishments that are outside the charmed circle. Much of this criticism is based on inadequate appraisal if it is not the product of bloated egos. Several university departments could have given a much better account of themselves if their principal funding agency had not been a prisoner of indecision and if it had maintained standards more purposively by offering management guidance and by insisting on certain stringent conditions to be attached to its grants. National institutions set up with great fanfare would not have become monuments of intellectual sterility if their vociferous critics had not palmed off their duds to them with superlative recommendations, and if some of them would condescend to do their major work there rather than in the unnecessarily more prestigious centres abroad. It is not as if the management is always wrong: there are inadequacies also in the scholars who work there—such as lack of motivation, postures of permanent dissent, and an inclination towards instant scholarship. A climate of dialogue and understanding has yet to be built into our academic ethos. High achievers are as much to blame for its absence as those whom they describe as academic buffoons and clowns. What we need is constructive debate and purposive action. Righteous anger has its functions but, beyond a point, it becomes self-defeating.

Some of us get needlessly worked up on the issue of relevance and priorities. The concept of relevance, to me, has to be related as much to national needs as to the needs of the conceptual growth of individual social science disciplines. Research priorities must take account of the demands made by critical areas of policy formulation, but not at the expense of the balanced growth of the social sciences. National needs are paramount, but financial support should be found also for the exploration of all worthwhile ideas even if they do not find a place in the priority list. A reasonable proportion of

research funds should be kept apart for those unforeseen ventures that promise insights and leads.

A major promotional thrust, contributing both to theory and to nation-building, is indicated. The forms that it should take is a subject that needs the most careful consideration. The payoff of *ad hoc* projects is limited; we must contemplate series of interlinked and inter-penetrating projects that can produce macro generalizations and can explore uncharted dimensions. Crash programmes have their place, but a great deal of research requires time, money, and continuous scholarly inter-change. Work of this type can be supported through long-duration research programmes and through interacting groups, permitting them maximum flexibility of approach and adequate financial support. The centres for these activities should be chosen with care, keeping in view their potential; but, once chosen, they should be allowed to operate without interference for a reasonable length of time. This could strengthen the small elite centres and contribute substantially to the development of university departments that show imagination and enterprise. Without diluting quality, we should aim at fair regional dispersal of these centres. Special encouragement should be given to interdisciplinary programmes, and to the growth of frontier disciplines. These initiatives should also aim at contributing towards chopping off dead wood and towards the flowering of creativity.

Inaugural Address

THE INDIAN Institute of Advanced Study has chosen a significant theme for examination and discussion in this seminar and I feel privileged that, in my capacity as Chairman of the Indian Council of Social Science Research, I have this opportunity of being associated with it. In many ways, as a nation, we find ourselves at the cross-roads. The organization and the results of the last General Elections in the country have, for the present, set at rest the prophecies of gloom about the stability of our polity, the success of the military operations and the political strategy which led to the establishment of Bangla Desh and the return of ten million refugees from our soil, have given us a sense of confidence as a people; yet all but the most self-complacent are aware that the major national problems of higher production and distributive justice, the problems of equal opportunity and national integration, are still with us. Unless these problems are faced and solved, the new found self-confidence will wilt under the pressures of want and social discontent. Political judgement and popular charisma have succeeded in evoking the deep urge for stability in our people, far-sightedness and a certain magnanimity in the hour of success have injected an element of pride in our national consciousness. These events have extended our lease on the claim to nationhood but the basic challenge remains. It is a challenge of reordering the social, economic, and political relationships and priorities in a country which, while it is poor, pluralist, and inegalitarian, has yet decided to become a socialist, integrated, and developed society devoted to the democratic way of life.

This is not a task for political leadership alone. Political leadership will have to play a major role in educating the people, in communicating the meaning of national goals, in mobilizing the will of the people and in imposing a discipline of which all societies which have opted for planned change stand in need. But in this task the artist, the educator, the scientist, the administrator, the industrialist, the businessman, the worker, and the peasant all have a role to play. It is in this context that I consider

the theme of the present Seminar—Social Sciences and Social Realities—to be a significant one.

What should be the orientation of the social scientist towards social reality? Of the three possible types of orientations, viz., the cognitive, affective and conative, that a person can have towards any object, the cognitive orientation is universally considered the most characteristic of any scientific pursuit. This cognitive orientation manifests itself in two forms of activity, viz., description of the phenomenon which is being observed in terms of the concepts characteristic of that science, and explanation—ideally, a casual explanation—of why and under what conditions the phenomenon occurs and with what consequences. The affective orientation is considered the most inappropriate for a scientist to have towards his object of study. Even the conative orientation is generally discouraged and, where it is admitted, the activity tends to be described as a technology rather than as science; that part of the cognitive activity which is immediately antecedent to conation or action tends to be separated into applied science and distinguished from pure science. Curiously, these distinctions between pure science, applied science, and technology have tended to get affectively laden even in the minds of scientists who otherwise deprecate affect, so much so that the activity of pure science is considered “pure” in the sense of being “superior” to the activities of applied science or technology.

The social sciences have followed the model set by the natural and physical sciences. Description and explanation are regarded as the primary functions of science, and “prescription” finds at best a marginal acceptance as a function of social science. The “affective” orientation is, of course, the very opposite of the “scientific” orientation. The orientation of science must be objective (i.e. free from subjective bias) and neutral as regards values. The “affective” orientation is by its very nature non-objective in the sense that it attributes properties to the object under observation that the latter may not possess; and the “prescriptive” orientation is admittedly concerned with values and the desired end-states in terms of which existing reality is sought to be modified.

The controversy which is focused upon the value-neutrality of social science is an old one and there is little that I can add to either side of the discussion. I think that in its descriptive and explanatory phases there is a sense in which social sciences can be value neutral, though I concede that the scientists’ personal value system may influence his choice of research theme and the facets of social reality that get highlighted in his perception. Even so, the problem of value-bias at this level is not a logical problem and can be overcome by developing a suitable technology. At the evaluative and prescriptive levels the scientist cannot evade the question of values. Even if he does not subscribe to a particular set of values he will have to specify what means can and should be employed to achieve specified ends. Questions of value attach both to the ends sought and the means recommended by the scientist even when the scientist may not himself subscribe to a particular set of values.

Social scientists may take the position that they do not wish to involve themselves in either evaluative or prescriptive tasks since if they so involve themselves they will either accept certain values and stand to lose their objectivity or not accept the values for themselves and function only as technocrats. But if they do take this position of aloofness it might mean that social science as an activity will die out for lack of social relevance; or a group of persons who may not call themselves “social scientists” will

take it upon themselves to use social science findings to provide the prescriptions that they consider appropriate. It is, of course, always possible that particular individuals among those who are engaged in social science endeavour may find themselves temperamentally unwilling or unsuited to take on the tasks of evaluation, diagnosis, prescription, and advice in a contemporary social situation; but it seems neither possible nor necessary that social science endeavour as a whole should keep itself segregated from an active **orientation to contemporary social reality**.

The value dilemma is not the only one which prevents social scientists from taking on an advisory or prescriptive role. It is argued, and I think with considerable justice, that we just do not know enough as social scientists to be able to give worthwhile advice. I sympathize with this position and I fear that there is a real danger of social scientists being tempted into the role of doctors when their equipment is adequate only to enable them to function as quacks or the modern equivalents of shamans and exorcisers. But I think that this danger should spur us to greater effort at improving our knowledge and equipment rather than to a withdrawal from our social responsibility. This is the justification for bodies like the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and they should do all they can to extend in scope and deepen in sophistication the research and knowledge base of social science activity. We find ourselves today in a situation where the increasing complexity of modern life and the realization of the inadequacy of a purely economic and econometric approach to planned development is compelling political leaders and administrators to seek new "consultants". The social sciences have so far stood on the side lines and enjoyed the luxury of social comment without organizational responsibility. The awareness of this new responsibility has made us introspective about what we can offer and how much of what we can offer could be said to be truly based **on our knowledge gained from a scientific quest**.

Having said this and having conceded the need to be modest in our claims, let me raise a query: What really is the nature of the distinction between a doctor and a quack? I think that while there are two significant differences between the two, one relates to the quality of the "knowledge" that the two possess and the other to their respective orientations to the problems that they seek to solve. Both of them are faced with problems which have an immediacy occasioned by the suffering of the patient and the fear of death but while the quack thinks he knows the answer and while his certitude closes his mind, the doctor always carries an awareness that his knowledge is limited and changing, and that new knowledge must modify his practice. He knows that the self-evident truths of one generation of doctors are often wholly unsatisfactory by the next. **Even so, the doctor must prescribe.**

I do not wish to carry this analogy further, but I would like to suggest that there is an immediacy about our own social situation and that, with our limitations in mind, we may still have to help the best we can.

If we agree that the social scientist's orientation to social reality cannot be a wholly passive one, we should turn to examine what some of the tasks for the social scientist might be. I will try to answer this question not by listing substantive themes, but by indicating the categories of actions that I consider appropriate for a social scientist to engage in. In listing these, I am not suggesting a time sequence for the various tasks, nor do I wish to imply that what I give is a programme of work which is to be completed **in a given period of time**.

Let me begin by mentioning some of the major social goals and values on which there appears to be the widest measure of agreement. These are often conveyed by the terms Democracy, Equality, Economic and Social Growth, Secularism, and Social Justice. At the level of generality at which these terms are used, they provide a wide enough umbrella to allow many different meanings and often elicit a deceptive agreement. I think one task for social scientists is to seek to give specific content and meaning to these terms. What, for instance, is the meaning of "equality" in the social, economic, and political aspects of life? The effort to specify meanings will raise a debate and almost certainly reduce the area of agreement. But it will provide social scientists with better defined concepts to work with and will require the political leaders to specify and choose one of the several meanings in which they accept the term.

As the terms begin to get more specific meanings, it will become easier for the social scientist to proceed to another of his important tasks, *viz.*, to observe the social reality around him cross-sectionally as well as in a temporal sequence and say whether the society, of which he is himself a member, is moving closer to or further away from the goals that have been spelt out. This is a task that must be undertaken separately in the domain of each social science and also jointly across their borders. The task is not an easy one and involves the whole technology of framing indices and establishing systems for the continuous supply of data in relation to different regions, different segments of the population, and different aspects of social, economic and political life. The data may flow in from quantitative as well as qualitative studies, they will deal with macro-phenomena as well as with small, isolated communities. If the first task of the social scientists is one of definition and clarification of nationally acclaimed goals, the second task is to monitor the progress or regress of our society in terms of these goals.

The third task before social scientists is to examine the functioning of the various social structures using the term "social" in its inclusive sense—to see which of these structures facilitate and which ones hinder the achievement of the values and goals set out above. Such an examination would cover the fundamental and in a sense primordial structures such as those of village, caste, and family as also the structures created by the Constitution and the legislative activity of the State. It would cover the opportunity and accessibility structures as defined by the statements of policy, and rules and regulations devised by administrators to implement these policies and acts of legislation. Whereas the task of monitoring will be to answer the question whether-or-not or how-far the social goals are being approached, the third task requires the scientist to answer, as best as he may, the question why the goals are or are not being approximated.

Social scientists will not agree among themselves in their answers to either of these sets of questions. Their answers are going to be influenced by their varying technical ability, their varying theoretical positions, their varying perspectives on which of the various facets of social reality should receive prim attention, and by their criteria of what they would regard as success or failure. But it is not important that all social scientists should be agreed in these matters; what is important is that their hypotheses, their value premises, and their measuring yardsticks should be openly stated and available for scrutiny by others so that the latter can make their own choices.

The fourth task I would list for social scientists is the task of advising on ways in which the existing social structures could be rearranged and the existing procedures modified so that the desired end results may be attained. This is the prescriptive task

in which there is even greater scope for differences of opinion among social scientists, and wherein the need for a clear statement of goals and values in terms of which the recommendations are made is all the greater. When I suggest that the fourth task that a social scientist should undertake is the task of prescribing or advising on alternative ways of action by the planner, policy-maker, and political leader, I do not imply that social science today has all the knowledge required to tender such advice. But it is necessary that the social scientist should accept this task as one of his legitimate functions and not treat it as peripheral to his normal pre-occupations. Much research involving experimentation with different methods of policy formulation, administration, and management will be needed and an even larger number of ex-post facto studies of success and failures in administration will have to be undertaken to validate the pet assumptions that parade as scientific theories in relation to social, economic, and administrative policies. It is only through careful and painstaking work over a long period of time that social scientists will gain confidence in their own ability and a credibility in the eyes of others. But unless we accept responsibility for action we will not even begin the search for this new knowledge.

I hope that the discussion of this week-long Seminar will result in a clearer perception and statement of the role of the Indian social scientist vis-a-vis the social reality around him.

Social Sciences and Social Realities

Social Science in Social Action*

THE THEME of this paper is the application of the findings of social science research to social action. As a student of management studies, I shall focus my discussion on the use of research findings for the formulation of administrative policy and decision-making. My rationale for examining this aspect of social action is that modern societies rely so heavily on institutional framework for social intervention and social growth, that the policy-maker is the principal actor in social action, whether it is the government or any other agency that takes up the role.

Assuming that effective decision-making is the pivot for social action in the institutional framework, what kind of social science research could contribute to the task of policy formulation? I have examined the problems that confront both the social scientist and the decision-maker in the scene of action in order that the link between the two is seen with greater clarity.

I have first summarized the problems we face in studying action situations and the limitations of available research methodology in that exercise. Later I have discussed the nature of the demands that the administrator has to face in his decision-making role for social action, and finally, I have suggested some areas of research in the social sciences for a direct contribution to the decision-making task.

STUDYING SOCIAL EVENTS

Highlighting some key points relating to the nature of social events and the difficulties that exist in studying them, this section summarizes the characteristics of the action situation and the limitations of the research methodology used in its study. This summary will, I hope, clarify the suggestions made in last section of this paper for the

*I am indebted to Professors N. K. Sheth and Sasi B. Mitra for their very valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

type of approaches and studies necessary for developing viable concepts and a theory of action.

Action Situations. A significant characteristic of social phenomena is that manifest events are a result of several indistinguishable forces operating in a given situation. In understanding an event, both the physical situation, and the people taking part in the situation, are of importance. In its complexity each event is unique as well as similar to other events. A total understanding of the event requires an inquiry into individual, social, and technical systems, as well as the patterns of interaction among them (Roethlisberger, 1954).

In conducting such a study the researcher has to make himself acceptable. Therefore, he must control his own bias. Social scientists have long been concerned with observing social reality without causing disturbance in the system by their presence. Anthropologists try to gain acceptance in the community before undertaking their research. Statistical sophistication and experimental designs significantly attempt to reduce the researcher's bias and his influence on data. Nonetheless, bias cannot be entirely done away with; and it would vary from one situation to another, from one researcher to another.

There are also many innovative contributions of research in the development of social science theory and its application. Deriving from the researches of Prasad (1950) on rumour during earthquakes in India, a series of studies by Festinger (1957) and his colleagues on communication and social influence are landmarks in the history of innovative designs in research work. These researches have led to the theory of cognitive dissonance. Likewise, studies by Cantril (1967) have led to methodological refinements in survey techniques and have contributed significantly toward review of national policies. Cantril's studies in the Dominican Republic and in Cuba were the first to suggest methods of testing public response to government policy. Cantril used special survey techniques to provide significant data on sensitive issues to the U.S. policy-makers during World War II and the years following it.

In my studies in Bihar, set up to find out whether there was factual basis for the allegation that a bureaucratic system of organization responds poorly to emergency, the famine offered a dynamic laboratory for studying this question. Allen Grimshaw's Poona Flood Study (1965) and a series of disaster studies by Roy C. Clifford (1956) are examples of seeking natural situations for research. There has been great emphasis on finding "natural" situations in order to minimize researcher bias.

Research Methodology in Studying Social Events. The complex nature of a social event poses serious problems in methodology. Each discipline, such as sociology, psychology, or political science, has a distinctive focus in the study of a phenomenon. A sociologist's emphasis is generally derived from assumptions about the community or the group; a psychologist accends the motivational structure. The variables in the design of studying are primarily derived from the researcher's experience and the background of his discipline. Job satisfaction studies, for example, have distinctive emphasis on caste, groups, community, motivational system, leadership, etc., depending upon, and consistent with, the researcher's academic orientation (see Sharma, 1971; Sheth, 1968; Dayal and Saiyadain, 1970; Herzberg, 1966).

A synthesis of the various studies on job satisfaction may have provided useful knowledge to the manager but we know relatively little, for instance, as to how the interactions between sociological and psychological variables influence job satisfaction itself. To the extent social, psychological, economic, and political aspects are inter-related, and job satisfaction in a work situation is influenced by a combination of all these, a valid theory of work cannot be constructed unless the interactions among the factors are also fully studied. The available knowledge fails to explain, for example, why a clerk in a government office appears to accept the discipline of the superior more readily than the clerk in a production unit with much higher salary and better working conditions. The lack of a theory of work, or even specific knowledge about the criticality of factors that account for job satisfaction is, at least in part, due to a segmented approach in the study of social reality, and the predilections of the researcher's academic discipline (Mills, 1959).

Briefly, the total study of a social event requires an identification of the critical variables as well as a study of the interactions among these variables. Methodology for identifying the variables is often poor. The study of their interactions is even more inadequate. Argyris and his team at Yale University (Argyris, 1965), the associates of the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioural Science, Washington, D.C. (Bradford *et.al.*, 1964), Bales (1949, 1970) at Harvard, and others, deriving inspiration from Kurt Lewin, have developed measures of social interaction, which may in due course change the research methodology in this field. The theoretical framework has to tap the underlying rather than the manifest variables for a study of social phenomenon. Listing the several aspects of studying the organizational dynamics, Argyris (1970: 278) says:

The first principle holds that those theoretical frameworks that tap the underlying, rather than the manifest, variables tend to provide a more useful and complete understanding. These underlying variables are usually called *genotypic* while the manifest variables are called *phenotypic*.

Systems models derived from physical and mathematical sciences for the study of social situations are an advancement in conceptualizing such problems, but these models are as yet difficult to use in field studies. The identification of sub-systems and their mutual influence is difficult to operationalize and is often arbitrary (Dayal *et.al.*, 1972; Brown and Jaques, 1965; Katz and Kahn, 1966). While the social phenomenon offers serious difficulties in studying it, the advancement of knowledge has necessitated specialization in each discipline in the social sciences, thus making integrated models difficult and rare (Boulding, 1970; 1966; Deutsch, 1969).

To integrate differentiated knowledge, team research is attempted. A common feature of such an approach to the study of social events is that each specialist in the team appears to rely heavily upon the accepted, sometimes orthodox, principles of his own discipline. Consequently, each team member is often found studying the same event from distinctly different perspectives and there is no meeting point among them. Hence an understanding of the underlying interactions in the event remains elusive.

In recent years there has been an increasing tendency for setting up institutions to cut down the barriers between the disciplines. The attempt has been but partially successful. The family planning programme in India, for example, includes doctors,

social scientists, social work specialists, etc. Each appears to demarcate his area of study and to examine the problems from the perspective of his own field of specialization rather than from a well-coordinated total perspective. A team approach must evidently achieve more than the several isolated perspectives on a situation.

Paradoxical though it may seem, the study of a social phenomenon requires a discipline-free perspective, even though the training of the researcher calls for a high measure of specialization. In fact, we know very little about developing an integrated approach when specialists from different fields work together on a project.

These are some of the difficulties we face in studying action situations and finding a dependable research methodology.

NATURE OF THE POLICY-MAKER'S TASK

Assuming that, for social action, the application of research findings depends on how relevant the findings are for the actor, I have examined in this section the characteristics of the situation in which the decision-maker functions, and his principal needs of knowledge in the policy-making function.

The Action System. The main characteristics of the administrator's action system are three:

1. It is a dynamic system. There is a continuous change of the forces that influence it. The manifestations of certain events may be similar; the causes may be different. The riots of yester-year may not have the same causal antecedents as those of today. Current social unrest may represent a social and political confluence of forces that are appreciably different from those of the past and from those that may appear in the future. Hence action choice has to relate to the causal aspect rather than the similarity or dissimilarity of the manifest form of the event.
2. The situation in which the decision-maker functions has many interacting variables that influence an event. The variables are difficult to identify and harder to study. Furthermore, the effect of interaction among the variables may be, in aggregative confluence, different from the influence of each discrete variable. The concept of synergy, with its roots in Gestalt psychology, has attracted the attention of the social analyst because the sum total of parts has a result that is different from the additive value of the known variables in the situation. The character of the aggregate is different from the character of its parts.
3. Those who are affected by the decision-maker's decision respond to it. This response often happens to be a mixture of reactions to the particular decision and to the other aspects of the total situation. The totality may consist of the immediate response to the decision-maker, to the history of relationships and to the many indeterminate situational factors. Yet the decision-maker needs to make a prior evaluation of the consequences of his decision even though such an evaluation defies precision. For example, policies that seem highly rational, and should generally benefit employees, are sometimes rejected when they

should really evoke enthusiastic acceptance. This is a fairly common experience. The evaluative and predictive aspects of decisions are complex and lead to inaccurate judgement.

A policy-maker is thus concerned with three aspects of the situation in which he is placed: (i) understanding relationships among the variables and their impact on the particular event; (ii) choices of action relevant to the situation; and (iii) prediction of the consequences of the choice made by him. With what tools shall he handle these concerns?

The social scientist's preoccupation has been mostly with analyzing the situation by studying the causal relationships among the variables identified by him. Methodological limitations induce the researcher to isolate a few variables and examine them. Sometimes a large number of variables are studied in a matrix form whereby inter-relationships among the variables are established. Even in this respect, the relationships are seen in a situation which is static insofar as they can substantially change over time or by the intervention of external forces. For example, a strike situation might change by intervention of the government and the relationship between wages, wage differentials, or other conditions found in the matrix may be no longer valid.

Research on how to determine choices for action in a given situation has attracted limited interest among social scientists, except among those interested in mathematical applications or operations research. Hence the policy-maker cannot easily reach out for data. In management study, social scientists have begun to develop some models of problem-resolution but these are limited in scope and have specific applications (Kepner and Tregoe, 1965; Roethlisberger, 1954; Simon, 1960).

In the third aspect of the decision role, the policy-maker is concerned with the short and long-term implications of his decisions. Most social scientists provide help in this area by employing deductive or inductive logic, i.e., by making use of the teleological and heuristic models. The recurrence of identifiable patterns of behaviour sometimes enable the social scientists to forecast the future course of events (Boulding, 1966; Bennis, 1966; Katz, 1960). Deductive or inductive logic often have, from the policy perspective, serious limitations: trends do not always indicate the appropriateness of the action required on the part of the administrator.

The policy-maker has to manipulate the forces in a given situation in order to achieve the intended results. He has to manipulate the forces by intuitive judgement because research findings seldom identify the criticality of these forces. Kurt Lewin's field forces analysis (Lewin, 1951) for identifying the positive and negative forces in a given situation, and his model of equilibrium, are not sufficient for suggesting which of the forces the policy-maker should manipulate. This model has been used by social scientists for teaching purposes but it has obvious weaknesses. The confluence of forces and their potency, either singly or in combination, at best rests on the policy-maker's hunch.

Briefly: social science research, until recently, has provided a limited framework to a decision-maker *in his decision role*. The emphasis is at best on the analysis of an event, and seldom on the two other vital aspects of the decision-making situation, viz., making action choices relevant to the situation, and predicting the consequences of the action choice made by the decision-maker.

DIRECTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN POLICY FORMULATION

Views vary markedly among scientists on how relevant or useful to society research should be. Some feel strongly that scientific research is highly individualistic and the researcher follows the dictates of his conscience irrespective of the relevance of his line of inquiry to the society. The other extreme view holds that science is of little purpose unless it is relevant to the society. There is a middle position which suggests that social science research can be relevant mainly for analysis of the situation and not for forecasting the future (Dube, 1971).

Rather than dispute any of the philosophical conventions about utilitarian or individualistic approaches, I would plead for the view that encourages social research in its widest context so long as a researcher exercises the care and rigour of scientific methodology which differentiates good and reliable research from the poor and indifferent.

Just as researches in the physical and natural sciences and in technology have contributed to the growth of industry, so should development of the social sciences contribute to the management of the society and its institutions. For achieving this growth, researchers who are impelled by their own spirit of inquiry are needed as much as those who are guided by the relevance of their research work to society. Value judgements that assign *good, useful, unscientific, irresponsible*, for one kind of research or the other seem to me unwarranted in the context of achieving the objective of "science for living" (Dayal, 1971).

From this perspective, the overall direction of research in the social sciences for the policy-maker's use has to take new paths. I regard two relatively independent areas of research as being important in the context of the decision-maker's needs: (i) Better understanding of the situation at macro- and micro-levels for determining alternative courses of action; and prediction of the response of people to a decision and (ii) refinements and innovations in research methodology for studying the dynamics of social events and for constructing viable theory.

Understanding the Situation. Currently, social science research contributes the analytical framework for understanding causal relationships among the variables in the situation and the understanding of the situation in the context of the environment. There are only a few studies that aim at the other two aspects of the decision-making task, namely, action and prediction. The mathematical sciences, and the economic models, have concerned themselves with them. In social science research, the lack of emphasis on these aspects is due partly to the limitations of methodology and partly to inadequate interaction between the social scientist and the decision-maker. We need to identify the various needs of the decision-maker and the possible directions in which research should progress.

Broadly, social science has three primary aims: (i) Theory formulation and model building; (ii) establishment of relationships (preferably causal relationships) between one factor and another; and (iii) solution of problems in specific or defined situations. Except in the pursuit of the first aim, which has a more general base, social science research suffers from the limitations of time and space. It reflects on a static situation in a living system which is essentially dynamic.

The testing of assumptions that govern action requires perseverance and years of systematic research. The studies by Deutsch on cooperation and competition (1949), and of Deutsch and Collins (1951) on interracial housing had to be carried on for years. The former point to the conditions for competition and cooperation between groups, between societies, and between nations. The understanding of such conditions helped the researcher to suggest strategies of conflict resolution. The interracial housing studies suggest how atmosphere could be created to adopt and execute a policy of non-segregation. Depth studies in the wider perspectives and comparative situations in societies may provide a clearer perception of the social reality in time and space.

Social science research has relevance at both the macro- and the micro-levels. At the macro-level, a clear understanding by the policy-maker of the nature of interdependence between different variables is necessary. He needs to know, for example, how social customs in a community influence the family planning programme. The business executive has to know how change in family relationships will influence his organizational design and administrative practices. These are the basic realities that research can establish. More important from the policy point of view is the knowledge as to how much of one aspect, or a combination of what different aspects together, influences a given situation. Refinement in social science to examine issues of this kind is **only now being attempted, largely through computer applications.**

Relationships between observable factors and physical phenomena are easily established. Computers have contributed enormously in establishing relationships between quantifiable aspects. In the field of behaviour, in social events in communities, the relationships which concern policy-makers are hard to isolate and even harder to establish in any precise manner. For example, why does one community receive the family planning programme differently from another, when both have a strong cultural bias against such a course of action? The social-psychological processes which result in differential responses appear to defy quantification or even systematic understanding. Generalizations of social-psychological factors at the macro-level are not at all easy **and, without conscious care, could be misleading.**

Is there some way of generalizing the reactions of communities to national programmes? Are there some features in the community culture which invite positive response and others which do not? Has the culture of the community anything at all **to do with the acceptance or rejection of the government's policy?**

What kind of changes are resisted by people and what kind are readily absorbed? Is it possible to develop a model which can indicate what kinds of changes, in what **kind of societies, under what conditions are acceptable or otherwise?**

A similar logic applies to a large number of social situations about which the policy-maker has to decide in his work-a-day life. Under what conditions do riots occur? What are the indices available to him to know the pulse of the community? What should a manager look for when he wants to introduce new ways of doing things? Stated briefly, it seems to me that macro-level studies must yield a broad perspective on key relationships relevant to managing the affairs of the society and on other aspects of a community's affairs. While discussing the contributions of science, Boulding (1966: 13) suggests: "Experiment, it should be noted, is not essential to the scientific process: prediction, however, in the sense of an exact image of the future, is essential".

At the micro-level the contribution of social science research has been far more specific than it has been at the macro-level. In a given situation, in an organization or a community, it is possible to understand the causation and also to identify the forces that can be more meaningfully manipulated than other forces. It has been possible to develop models which can effectively apply to micro-level situations, though they do not yield quantitative formulations so far.

The aim of macro- and micro-level studies in social sciences is to develop viable theories of social phenomena and social action. Deutsch (1969: 1080) says:

Our housing study was not formulated with a theoretical objective and, unfortunately, we were not alert enough to appreciate fully the wider theoretical significance of some of our findings. These findings suggested that behaviour change preceded attitudinal change. The white women in the integrated projects often behaved in an unprejudiced manner toward their Negro neighbors before they felt this way. Had we been clever enough to realise the general implications of this finding we might have anticipated the major idea underlying Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance....

Decision-choice and prediction of consequences are more difficult areas of research. From my perspective the limitations of appropriate methodology are the most serious difficulty in these aspects of study.

Methodology of Social Science Research Vast improvements in experimental designs and in statistical analyses have already been achieved. More attention has to be devoted to analyzing the interactive or response systems, because living systems cannot be fully understood without the ability to understand the factors that lie below the surface of action; yet, like the chemical process, must be inferred from what is observed. There has to be a dependable method of analyzing underlying processes in an observable social situation.

In the work of Lewin (1948), Deutsch and Collins (1951), Deutsch (1949), Sherif (1964, 1962) and in several studies undertaken by the Unesco (Klineberg, 1950) useful models are available. This kind of research cannot develop unless long-term funds for conducting relevant studies are committed to selected institutions (Singh, 1972).

The development of methodology includes three related factors. The first has to do with research methodology for studying dynamic or living relationships; the second has to do with achieving a synthesis among disciplines; and the third has to do with the transfer of knowledge to the policy-maker.

I have discussed the methodological problems earlier. The most significant problem relates to measuring interaction, i.e. the process in social action. Bales (1951), Whyte (1965), Kelly and Stahelski (1970), Guest (1962), and many others have attempted to codify process data. The instruments are, however, crude. As in chemical engineering, we need to develop more precise measures of interaction processes, because action strategies and predictive capability of research are possible primarily through such measurement. And for policy formulation, these are critical. In India no significant research in methodology has been done. Lynton and Pareek (1967) used the T-group situation to measure its effectiveness for its members. Dayal and Thomas (1968)

have also used this methodology. Rarely has there been any serious attempt to use more sophisticated tools for the measurement of interaction data.

Apart from codification of interaction data, a great deal of work has to be done on their interpretation. Systematic studies of the predictive value of the interaction data are highly important. These concerns have been evident in the action research methodology and change programmes in village studies in India. Nonetheless, experimental designs and field studies to test the methodology and to innovate seem a precondition for using social science approaches to policy formulation.

Systematic knowledge for team building in a research setting is in an elementary stage. The contribution of social sciences towards policy formulation would be greatly limited unless we can develop sufficient understanding of how inter-disciplinary approaches can be established for studying social problems.

There is the consideration of transferring knowledge. How does a manager acquire understanding of dynamic processes, and how does he gain confidence in using data for social action? It is unlikely that a decision-maker would become a sociologist or a psychologist. He cannot be expected to become a theorist. At the same time, a theoretical framework is necessary, in today's context, for understanding the dynamics of a situation. The question, therefore, is how social scientists can develop relatively reliable and valid models for a decision-maker's understanding and use. This process is complex because the decision-maker has to develop a new perspective, from one of immediacy to one which is dialectical or evolutionary. It devolves on the social scientist to help make this process less difficult.

There is another vital question for which answers are vague : How do the decision-maker's personal values influence his decision? How valid is the statement that effectiveness of civil servants is independent of their faith in a particular type of political leadership? Is it necessary, for example, that managerial effectiveness in the public sector system depends on how much faith its management has in the system itself? Is it possible to relate the decision-maker's value system to the nature of the task, or the social system in which he operates?

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Role of The Social Science

THE SOCIAL sciences are a major contemporary influence, but their growth has followed a slow and tortuous path. In the realm of understanding and explaining social phenomena the methods of persistence, of authority, and of intuition have had primacy over the method of science. When claims were first staked for a science of society (comparable in rigour and results with the more established sciences) and efforts were directed towards their realization, the model of one or the other of the recognized sciences was invariably before our founding fathers. In consequence, they tried to develop a science of society in the image of another science the nature of whose field was quite different from that of the new discipline, or disciplines, encompassing man's social life. This caused considerable distraction and much wasted effort. Early endeavours in this field also met with a great deal of resistance, much of it born out of prejudice or flowing from faulty and distorted understanding of purpose. The established disciplines did not take kindly to the new rivals; the latter were also partly to blame, for their performance did not visibly match their professions.

What happened in the West a century or more ago, appears to be repeating itself (with some significant differences) in the developing countries today. Here the population at large remains unsensitized to the nature, the function, and the potential of the social sciences. The social scientists themselves are somewhat uncertain of their aims and functions: their grandiose and sometimes awkward claims notwithstanding, they are self-consciously searching for a role for themselves and their specialities. The elite, at the same time, have demonstrated an unmistakable ambivalence towards them. The social sciences are often considered some kind of a luxury : a status symbol, whose relevance and applicability are still vague and undemonstrated. In despair, the elite turn to them with impossible and utterly unrealistic expectations. Naturally, they get frustrated when they do not find what they seek.

A wide-ranging debate on the role—as well as possibilities and limitations—of the social sciences is timely and useful. For its success two conditions appear essential.

First, social scientists must enter the endeavour with an open mind and in a spirit of sincere heart-searching, divesting themselves of predispositions, public postures, tendencies of self-justification and easy rationalization. Second, at an early stage in the formulation of a national plan of research, the consumers of research should join with them in a meaningful dialogue.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND SOCIETY

The social sciences are a recognized stream of knowledge, and their practitioners must be viewed essentially as men of knowledge. In this role their functions are well-identified:

1. Discovery of facts and their interpretation;
2. Discovery of problems;
3. Systematization of the existing body of knowledge;
4. Dissemination of knowledge; and
5. Fighting for truth, i.e. for establishing the logical validity of an approach.

From this inventory I have deliberately left out another recognized function of men of knowledge—perpetuation of sacred truths through exact and faithful representation of their symbolic expression and through maintenance of self-contained, stable, unchallengable, and sacred systems of unchanging truth. The reasons for this omission are obvious: the social sciences do not recognize the existence of any unchanging and unchallengable "sacred truth". A vanishing minority of social scientists in India still possibly upholds this function, but it is neither articulate nor forceful. A variant of this category continues to propagate and defend the concepts and the methods as well as the dogmas and the rituals of its mentors located abroad or at home. But even this tendency, happily, is on the decline.

The five functions enumerated above describe a major part of the role of the social scientist in society. In respect of the social life of man there undeniably are areas of almost total darkness: answers to far too many *what, where, when, how, and why* questions of man's social life are not available. The situation is complicated by the prevalence of half-truths, pseudo-truths, and superstitions concerning the nature of social reality or parts of it. The path towards the understanding of social reality in all its diverse and complex ramifications can be illuminated by the discovery and interpretation of facts and by systematic integration of available knowledge. Facts suggest problem areas for deeper enquiry; well-formulated problems, in turn, point not only to areas in which more facts are needed, but also indicate what kinds of facts are needed and how to collect them. The method of collecting facts governs, to a large extent, their reliability and validity as well as their effectiveness in answering the questions that originate the research endeavour. Sharpening of the tools of investigation and analysis and working towards their increasing perfection thus becomes essential. In the final analysis, the problems, the facts, and the techniques of investigation become meaningful by demonstrating their capacity to generate significant ideas that can be tested and proved and that have some applicability. To be socially useful these ideas as well as systematically organized and analyzed facts require wide diffusion. It is not enough that they

circulate within the narrow circle of the practitioners of an academic speciality, to make an impact they should percolate at least to the decision-makers and moulders of public opinion.

Meaningful social research, therefore, would involve asking the right questions, fashioning tools that can find answers to them with economy and precision, and generating ideas characterized by adequacy of explanation and reliability of their diagnosis as well as prognosis. Its principal objective should be to provide understanding. This understanding would bring into focus problem areas and illuminate alternative paths of action with an estimate of their costs and consequences.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND DEVELOPING SOCIETIES

In the contemporary world social sciences are as relevant to the rich nations as they are to the poor nations. Affluence generates a multitude of social and psychological problems that defy all attempts at handling them if this effort is not backed by an understanding of their overt and covert dimensions and ramifications. Poverty, on the other hand, poses a wide range of problems that impinge not only on the domestic policies of the new nations but also on international developments. The communications revolution has transformed the images and goals of men in developing societies; they do not accept their poverty as the dictate of an unalterable fate, they wish to eradicate it as speedily as possible. But to their dismay they find the gap between the rich nations and the poor nations widening. This growing imbalance can pose a threat to the world order. Thus we need today an adequate understanding of the sociology of affluence as well as of the sociology of poverty.

The developing societies have a set of special problems ranging from their viability and survival as independent nations to technological transformation and economic progress. Little is known about the social morphology of these countries, except the fact that the fibre of their nationhood is brittle. In their context, therefore, the social sciences have to begin with the natural history function of description and progressively assume an explanatory role, attempting ascending levels of generalization and predictability. The pulls of parochial loyalties pose an important, but *only one*, set of problems distracting the old societies from emerging as cohesive nations. The range and strength of other problems remain to be determined and measured. Planning for economic progress in most of these countries is often reduced to a blind game in the absence of the necessary benchmarks, viz., concrete social and economic data to provide a realistic base for planning. Without the insights derived from social science research, many of the dilemmas of development remain unresolved, resulting sometimes in simultaneous encouragement to contrary pulls. The need for scientific understanding of social phenomena, especially the emerging trends, is great in these countries but most of them have **neither the men nor the money to plan and carry out the necessary investigations.** Research by outsiders can help, but the assumptions and motivation behind it are sometimes of questionable legitimacy.

India has all the well-identified problems of developing societies—the urgency of creating a cohesive, viable, and durable nation; the need for inducing rapid economic growth; and the pressure for meeting the persistent demand for distributive justice. In a quarter century of its independence it has gone through a wide range of experiences

and moods—from hope to despair, from fear of disruption to evidence of unanticipated reserves of strength and unity, and from threats of economic collapse to signs of recovery. There is no doubt that it has shown unusual resilience and remarkable adaptive capacity, but it is equally clear that the country is not adequately prepared to cope with many areas of doubt and uncertainty. One has to reckon with the fact that we seem to attain a strong sense of unity only when faced with a major threat of aggression from outside. Against the equally serious but internal threats of poverty, population explosion, and unemployment we do not, however, find ourselves so united. Discipline—social, political and economic—tends to be lax and the country finds itself unable to enforce the laudable norms that it thoughtfully evolves. There is often a wide divergence between the overt aims of policy and its consequences in practice. It has often failed to anticipate the factors that slow down the wheels of progress. Uninformed by analytical insights, administration and planning go by experience, intuition, and at times even by hunches.

In comparison with many developing countries, India has a wider range of relatively dependable statistics. Its social morphology is understood at least in broad outline. Also, analytically significant studies are published every year. Even so, all this work does not provide a coherent picture either of the structural base or of the emerging trends. Much of the research has little contemporary relevance. On major questions of the day, when any concern in regard to them has been shown, the research exercises have only scratched the surface. A great deal of research turns out to be the pursuit of triviality. There is considerable unease in taking up major issues for investigation, in developing appropriate research tools for them, and in making analyses that throw up significant ideas. In sum, the potential of social science research to provide understanding on key issues and critical areas remains largely unutilized.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social science research, let there be no illusion, is not a substitute for national development; in many instances it would not even indicate a clear policy-line. Social scientists are nowhere close to being social engineers, a claim that is sometimes made arrogantly. The power of the social sciences is explanatory, and its practitioners are essentially analysts. Even within this general limitation, they can make a useful contribution to national development.

Six major possibilities of the utilization of social science research towards national development can be identified. They are:

1. Social science research throws up valuable background data from which the planner can make his own assessment of the prevailing situation, especially of the magnitude, complexity, and ramifications of the problems he has to handle.
2. Carefully designed analytical studies can illuminate critical areas of policy. The overt and covert dimensions of a given problem emerging in such studies provide the planner with a measure of foresight to deal with them effectively and efficiently.
3. These studies open up the possibility of testing the validity of the assumptions that must, of necessity, be made by the planner in setting his proximate and ultimate objectives.

4. They enable the planner to estimate the possible consequences and costs of the different choices available to them in determining the path for the attainment of their goals.
5. Diagnostic studies suggest *where* and *why* particular projects go wrong. Their unintended consequences are also brought to light.
6. Wide dissemination of social science research findings increases general awareness in respect of the situation to be met as well as the policy designed for this purpose. This may enhance credibility of particular policies and prepare the people for them. It may also help towards building up popular pressures for reformulation of particular policies or for weeding them out altogether.

Some or all of these possibilities can be realized provided social research is geared to policy needs and the planner is responsive and sensitive to the research findings.

PURE VERSUS APPLIED RESEARCH

The relative merits and claims of *pure* and *applied* research have been discussed time and again. This unending debate makes little sense.

What is "pure" research in the social sciences? A great deal of anthropological research was stimulated by the needs of colonial administration. Many significant works in sociology emerged in response to the pressure of deeply disturbing problems. How does one classify classics like *Suicide*, *Management and the Worker*, *An American Dilemma*, *The American Soldiers*, *The Authoritarian Personality*, and the Kinsey reports. Each of these works had a contemporary relevance and was focused on an existing social problem. Besides contributing to theory and methodology, these studies also illuminated an area of darkness and provided valuable material for possible policy planning. Do they represent *pure* or *applied* research?

My argument is that all good social research is focused on problems, and that all good analyses have a manifest or latent potential of applicability. Some social scientists, let us recognize, preach what John Madge calls the "philosophy of empty plenty" when they support formulation of knowledge with no concern for doing something with it. The question is not that of pure or applied research, but of tapping studies for possible applications. The leads thrown up by good studies can be operationalized and pursued in applied terms. The so-called applied research is at best an adjunct to what is commonly called pure research. What matters most is locating the right problems and analyzing them in depth and in all their ramifications. Without this applied research is often reduced to the quest of the trite and the trivial.

THEORY BUILDING

It is obvious that we need sound theory. But how do we go about it? Shall we start running from nowhere in hot pursuit of theory? Such a blind race would yield perhaps only vacuous and spurious theory. The emphasis on theory building should not imply the undervaluation of data gathering; but to many, in practice, it does. This is unfortunate. Facts are important—in themselves, for proving or disproving hypotheses and for deriving generalizations of theoretical nature at different levels of abstraction.

It is not being suggested that social sciences can rest with assembling a great mass of data. The facts have to be arranged in a systematic and coherent manner. One has then to look for interconnections between parts and begin to seek meanings and explanations. This leads to the testing of hypotheses and to the emergence of generalizations.

At the present stage of the development of social sciences in India I would attach the highest importance to posing the right questions and to formulating and testing meaningful hypotheses. This would lead, in time, to theory building.

Theory, it can be argued, suggests the need for more facts and new hypotheses; this is not denied. It would be so indeed when we begin to evolve theoretical constructs valid for Indian conditions. But do we have many such constructs today? And we should not fail to be cognizant of the tyranny of established concepts. Without wide-awake awareness they can set invisible limits to thinking and data gathering.

CREATING NATION-WIDE DEBATES

I do not know if we have achieved "the civilization of the dialogue". It certainly is a worthy ideal, but there is growing evidence of manipulative interference with the much-needed dialogue. Subtle and often invisible forces work assiduously to mould opinion. The power of the mass media is tapped to fashion attitudes, and the process starts at a stage when the target is not in a position to resist it. Even "thought packages" are offered at a premium and are attractively gift-wrapped. What happens to the dialogue? But there is evidence to suggest that thought does not cease, that people resist manipulation if it is carried beyond a point, and that even the most well-greased and efficient thought-control machines fail in their objectives.

Dialogue, I suggest, is better than partisan propaganda. If it is informed by social science insights it can generate thought-processes which may have important implications for the course that the society adopts for itself. The social sciences are not in a position to legislate social change or to go beyond suggesting policy alternatives. Facts must be kept apart from the interpretation of facts. It is not difficult to visualize a situation where different groups of social scientists draw different inferences and conclusions from the same data. In this connection, I would like to draw attention to the separate notes in *The Report of the U.S. Commission on Obscenity and Pornography*. This Report, incidentally, has generated a useful dialogue in the U.S.A.

The ideal of objectivity is not outdated, although it is not the same thing as ethical neutrality. Objectivity involves also questioning and evaluating the assumptions implicit in theoretical formulations and research programmes. Ethical neutrality can induce one into playing it safe and even turning away from controversial issues; objectivity makes more exacting demands. Balanced appraisals are a better help to thought than prescriptive arguments. Objectivity does not rule out deep human concerns; it should not.

In India, social scientists have generated some dialogue on matters of major social concern—the holy cow, the intergenerational gap, the practice of untouchability, the problem of minorities, and so forth. The trend deserves encouragement. More and more social scientists should come out and should not hesitate to use the mass media to continue the dialogue. Thereby they will be contributing to the creation of greater

awareness of social realities and problems and, in the process, will be helping, to promote some serious thinking. The social scientist will have more to contribute to this dialogue when he is equipped with the findings of purposive research on issues of vital social concern.

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN INDIA

Earlier in this essay (see section on Social Sciences and Developing Societies) I have said a few harsh things about social science research in India. My comments refer to the general scene. Of course, there are some bright patches too, and there also is a welcome emergence of hopeful trends. But, by and large, a great deal remains to be done.

Let me briefly restate some of the major weaknesses of social science research in India. Much of it lacks a national focus and is not relevant to the major concerns of the day. In other words, the right questions are not being asked, or, when asked, they are not pursued seriously. There is no evidence of vigorous methodological innovation. There is excessive reliance on concepts established abroad and much uncritical use of borrowed methodology. In point of fact, a substantial part of our better writing is addressed to mentors and peers abroad, whose approval still means more to us than the approval of peers at home. We tend to get worked up on the trivial and count barren theoretical and methodological exercises as triumphs. In the alternative, we refuse to examine the social reality empirically and begin to seek answers to contemporary questions in ancient texts and traditions. Many of those who belong to this school end up being commentators or, even worse, glorifiers of the past. In sum, there is an air of unreality about much of the research activity in the country.

There are examples of outstandingly good work, but they invariably have a narrow focus. The ideas emanating from them are rarely subjected to systematic verification in wider areas. Without this a comparative and national perspective does not emerge. Thus, while such studies definitely fill a gap and set standards, it is difficult to generalize from them. Their validity remains to be tested, and there is little evidence of any organized effort to do this.

In the last two decades funds have been made available on an increasing scale to support social science research. There was some effort also to promote comparable research on selected themes. A considerable volume of data was gathered through these sponsored projects. One hopes that this data was of some use in planning. But I do not know of many significant conceptual or methodological gains registered through these projects. Some of them were poorly organized and indifferently executed; the participation of project directors was minimal and most of the work was left to ill-trained investigators. On the positive side, it may be said that government sponsorship did provide an impetus to social science research. But there is a negative side too, it resulted in a great deal of mechanical and some very shoddy work. One wonders how much they have enriched the research tradition.

Several agencies of the government, some specifically created for this purpose, are involved in social science research. Here too one gets a picture of a great deal of mechanical work and of a general sterility in respect of significant ideas. I have an uneasy feeling that these organizations have some built-in devices to distract them from

the path of creativity. Take the case of the Anthropological Survey of India. Has the country gained or lost by maintaining this monolith? Are its gains commensurate with what the taxpayer is spending on it? The Registrar-General's Office has carried out several surveys and produced an impressive number of reports. The record of this organization is certainly one of high productivity, but the scale of its operations is such that it has to sacrifice quality for quantity. Nevertheless, its publications are a rich and invaluable source of social data. Some imaginative programmes were initiated by the National Institute of Community Development and it has been maintaining a steady flow of publications. There is a good case for looking into and correcting the organizational incompatibilities and contradictions in government-run research institutions. Efforts should be made also to draw them into the main academic stream of the country.

Not many universities have adequate funds earmarked for research. The University Grants Commission has now offered to each university a grant for development of research. This should help, but the claim on these funds are so many, and such diverse factors (including non-academic ones) govern their disbursement, that individual scholars or groups cannot be assured continued support even on a modest scale. The number of research scholarships and fellowships has also increased over the years, and it is likely to increase further. This is to be welcomed. But these are often distributed equitably among the different departments and within the departments to students on the basis of marks, without any consideration of the quality of the research proposal or of the ability of the scholar to carry it out. What happens to the scholar is worse. Pre-doctoral training either does not exist or, where it does, it is not very effectively organised. The head or the supervisor assigns a topic for research to the scholar, who is then left to his own devices. There are notable exceptions, but in general it can be said that research themes are chosen without much imagination and the dissertations are written in a routine and mechanical manner. Not many scholars find the exercise a positive and stimulating experience. It is well-known how PhDs are awarded, in many cases, on a quid-pro-quo basis between supervisor and examiner.

I do not wish to suggest that we legislate either on the themes of research or on methods. But the academic leaders can certainly invest prestige into work on areas that they consider important. Methodological innovation can also be rewarded. Comparative and long-term research can be given special attention. Organization of research, at different levels, needs to be looked into; management guidance in this field will be a great help.

PRIORITIES IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

In the last five years a great deal of thought has been given to the problem of determining priorities in social science research in India. The Ford Foundation got together a number of prominent social scientists, planners, and development administrators for a dialogue on this theme. Later it undertook a more limited exercise to determine priorities in family planning research. The Indian Institute of Advanced Study organized a conference on urgent research in anthropology; a useful report of its deliberations has been published. A symposium organized by the Delhi Sociological Association has come out with a perceptive document containing a thoughtful list of research themes. The various surveys sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research have

indicated priorities in their respective fields. The University Grants Commission is seized of the problem and its panels of specialists as well as an interdisciplinary working group are deliberating on the issue.

A running thread in all these discussions is that problems of research should be chosen and formulated with care, and that they should have a definite relevance to strategies of nation-building and economic development. The need for collection of facts and their systematization, formulation of meaningful hypotheses, development of adequate investigational techniques suitable to Indian conditions, and emergence of significant ideas on a theoretical level is understood and emphasized.

The inventory given below draws heavily from the reports of the previous discussions on the subject. The thirty items are all important, but their numerical placing does not in any way indicate their relative importance. Assigning higher priority to some of them would need careful thought. Of course, some of them can be deleted and new ones can be added. The themes that appear most useful and propitious to me are :

1. Concept of national integration as found among different categories of population and the perception of barriers to it.
2. Changing "world views" of the different segments of the population.
3. Social stratification and social mobility; social, economic, and political bases of distribution of power; their implications for economic development.
4. Shifts in the political and economic power of the different regions of India and their reflection in the political processes.
5. Economic, social, cultural, and political factors promoting the emergence of para-military organizations prone to indulge in violence.
6. Development of functionally specific associational interest groups among the people.
7. Changes in caste structure in the different regions and the role of caste in the political, social, and economic processes.
8. Role of bureaucracy in nation-building and socio-political development in the specific cultural contexts of the different regions.
9. The gap between welfare and demands of distributive justice: problem of relating welfare administration to the economic and social aspirations of the people as well as to the national strategies of economic growth, social integration, and defence preparations.
10. Attitudes, world-views, and roles of student and non-student youth in different parts of the country, with special reference to recruitment to student leadership in universities and the strategies of student leaders.
11. Attitudes, world-views, and roles of working and non-working women in different parts of the country.
12. Diffusion of technological innovations in agriculture and social processes generated by them in rural society.
13. Identification of viable communities and "growth centres" in rural India.
14. Study of social trends and political processes in the border areas.
15. Ethno-historical study of reform movements, with reference to their ramifications in the productive system and power structure.
16. Role of family and kinship in different techno-economic settings.

17. Traditional communication networks and the mass media: their reach, effects, and role in nation-building.
18. Studies on the growth of entrepreneurship, with special reference to the emergence of new entrepreneurs.
19. Organizational behaviour; sociology of workers and management—similarities and contrasts in the private and public sectors.
20. Patterns of conflict and conflict resolution.
21. Studies on the development of social policy, with special reference to dynamics of decision-making.
22. The growth of professions and their role in nation-building and modernization.
23. Traditional and emerging elites; their conflicts and alliances; links between the elites and the masses.
24. Patterns and causes of unrest in tribal areas.
25. Changing patterns of relationship between clean and scheduled castes; emergence of new leadership in the scheduled castes, its strategies, and wider social effects of its politics.
26. Studies on different dimensions of law, legal processes, and social change.
27. Educational policy and its implementation: the fit between different levels of education, functions and dysfunctions of education.
28. Dissent and continued violence: its causes and the role of imported ideologies.
29. Case studies of institution building: identification of success factors; analysis of operational strategies.
30. Evaluation of the method and techniques of social research: their adequacy and effectiveness in relation to Indian conditions and the new problems that social research has to tackle.

Each of the major themes listed above will have to be broken up into sub-themes and operationalized. The magnitude of this task would be such that it would need concentrated thought of a number of specialist working groups.

DEVELOPING RESEARCH POTENTIAL

The deplorable state of higher education in India is all too well-known. Many competent groups have examined its malaise in depth, and have recommended urgent remedial action. Those in authority have expressed grave concern (and even alarm) at the decay and drift that has set in our universities, but they have done little else. There is no evidence of a will to take resolute action. In consequence, the situation is steadily deteriorating.

Judged in purely quantitative terms the social sciences appear to be doing well. The enrolment of students in social science subjects in colleges is going up, the clamour for more facilities for post-graduate instruction in these subjects generally evokes a favourable response for they cost so little, and even university departments are proliferating rapidly. But quality-wise their record is not too impressive. The social sciences do not always attract the best students, and high calibre teachers are often lost in the sea of mediocrity. The syllabi are outmoded and the age-old method of instruction promotes only rote learning. Reforms are often defeated by the apathy of a sizable part of the faculty.

It is a sad comment on the system, but let us recognize the fact that in most of our universities the power of negative thinking prevails. Imparting vitality and dynamism to social science education is blocked by the "princes" with entrenched interests as well as by the "peddlers" and the "pirates" who force themselves into the system and debilitate it from within. There certainly are many scholars with high personal achievement and even some schools with intense vitality, but in the vitiated atmosphere of our universities they find themselves unable to rise to their full stature.

Let us begin reforms at the first degree stage. The need for a phased modernization of the syllabi is imperative. This will have to be supported by production of imaginatively written textbooks that stimulate thought, emphasize elements that are relevant to contemporary India, and draw much of their illustrative content from Indian experience. To supplement the textbooks, we shall also have to produce a series of work books setting forth exercises based on the problem approach. Special attention will have to be given to the needs of the teachers by producing for them teacher guides, books of basic readings from recent contributions, and digests of current social science information as well as of facts and figures of interest and use to social science students. Summer institutes and seminars will have to be organized to familiarize the teachers with recent advances in theory as well as methodology and also with new methods of instruction. Intensive workshops will be needed to stimulate teaching and research in emerging frontiers both unidisciplinary and interdisciplinary.

At the master's level we shall have to make more exacting demands. Soft courses must be replaced by hard courses. The scale of the University Grants Commission's assistance to a department will have to be linked to the level of its performance. In fact the University Grants Commission will have to gather the courage to deny all support to departments whose products are substandard and who refuse to move with the times. At the same time it should act expeditiously to identify departments with innovative vigour and support them with finances and management guidance to emerge as centres of high creativity. Perhaps it will also be necessary to ensure them a measure of autonomy so that they can withstand the onslaughts of destructive forces from within their university and from outside. Selective admissions, modernized syllabi, radical alteration in methods of instruction and examination, and insistence on high quality performance are indicated if we want to develop the research potential of the country.

In this context it would be useful to pursue an idea mooted by J. P. Naik in his Leelawathy Lectures at Mysore—the idea of research institutes, with a small intake of Honours and Master's level students. The contemplated small size of the institutes will be an advantage: they will have the freedom to experiment and to evolve uninvolved procedures, and hopefully they will be relatively free from problems of indiscipline. They could take up instructional programmes of an inter-disciplinary nature and give special attention to emerging frontiers. Teaching will invigorate their research.

Training in the methodology of research can be productive if students enter it with a sound conceptual background and if the training programme itself is imaginatively organized with a clear definition of its objectives. The recent courses organized by different centres on behalf of the ICSSR provide valuable experience, and in developing continuing programmes at selected university centres we can draw upon its lessons. The new programmes will have to be of longer duration. They will have to go beyond techniques and discuss in greater depth the logic of social enquiry as well as the methods

of analysis. An increasing number of research workers will have to be trained to exploit the full potential of the new technology of research that is now available. Such programmes could also be useful in developing inter-disciplinary perspectives.

Experience, it is said, is a great educator. There can be no substitute for on-the-job training. This could be a positive and decisive influence, if it is planned carefully. The ICSSR will be well-advised to evolve guidelines for the training of the field personnel working in its projects and to spell out norms regarding its role, responsibilities, and credits.

The limitations of *ad hoc* projects are obvious: they are time and situation bound. It is good that the ICSSR is planning integrated projects, focused on special themes or broad areas, to be run on the basis of inter-departmental collaboration. The idea of long-term programmes—extending from five to ten years—should be experimented with. These programmes should comprise a series of inter-connected projects, and should make provision for discussion of interim results as well as methodology from time to time by a cross-section of the profession. For a few themes committees may be set up and assured time, money, and flexible procedures to pursue promising ideas. For development of research potential such organizational innovations are necessary. Some problems can be best handled by individuals, others require continued group involvement, and still others require sustained institutional direction. As such, we should not hesitate to make some daring experiments.

In sum, to develop research potential we need a multi-stage and a multi-dimensional effort. Organizational innovations, in this context, are as important as the choice of themes and tools.

The function that I visualize for social research is mainly explanatory: under certain conditions it can also be diagnostic. It cannot project a definite course of social action; it can, at best, only suggest policy alternatives. The social scientist is nowhere near the realization of the status and its attendant roles that Comte visualized for him, but let him not lose heart. Even within the limitations under which he must work, he can make a meaningful contribution. That he makes it possible for the policy-planner to move from the known towards the desirable but the unknown is a help of major consequence. Towards this end he has to sharpen his tools and define his focus, and approach his task with determination and dedication. In the final analysis, we will be judged by the quality of our products and by our success in communicating it to the community in general and to the policy-planner in particular.

Growth, Issues and Prospects

THE SOCIAL sciences have an important place in the life of any nation. Their role in developing countries is particularly significant because they are directly concerned with the understanding and manipulation of the process of social transformation. In India, the social sciences have acquired a place of considerable importance since independence. Initially, three different kinds of research activities in social sciences emerged: researches on social tensions sponsored by the UNESCO and the Government of India; village and community studies undertaken by social anthropologists; and researches in social change and community development sponsored by the Planning Commission. Mention may also be made of the contribution of economists to the problems of planned development and the need for training skilled personnel. This resulted in the establishment of a number of social science institutions in the fifties and early sixties either as extensions of governmental departments or as autonomous bodies. The list of institutions becomes truly impressive if it is extended to include those established by the state governments or those in the allied fields of law and education.

The question, therefore, is not whether the social sciences in India have an important place in national development but whether they have grown in a satisfactory way and are capable of making significant contributions. If one took into account the circumstances under which they have developed or compared their achievements with that in the field of science and technology, where the investment of resources has been significantly greater, the social sciences have probably not fared badly. Some social sciences, such as economics and management, have done somewhat better than others, say, political science, psychology, or sociology. But if one's judgement is influenced by the achievements in the West, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, the obvious answer is that much remains to be done by way of lending vitality to the social sciences in India.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Ever since independence, there has been a great deal of interest in relating the social sciences to the problems of development in India. An enormous amount of work has been done in different areas. Some problems have attracted researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds while others have been confined to particular disciplines alone. Among the important areas of concern have been researches on: the response to development programmes and the studies of attitude and behaviour change; socio-economic surveys of cities; institutional organization and functioning, particularly with reference to Panchayati Raj and cooperatives; the economics of planning, development, and land reforms; techno-economic surveys; demography and family planning; educational research on measurement, guidance and training; studies of political behaviour and political mobilization; community (village) social organization in general or with particular reference to its political, economic and social aspects; caste and social stratification; management and administration; urbanization and industrialization; social problems and social welfare; and historical analysis of social trends and movements.

Differences in the state of development of the different social sciences, in the immediate relevance of the various disciplines to problems of development, and in the specificity or generality of the themes taken up for research, make it difficult to arrive at general propositions that hold for all disciplines at a given point of time. Keeping this limitation in view, an attempt may be made to broadly pinpoint some of the major trends, disregarding the specific problems taken up for research.

The initial upsurge in research led to a great deal of activity. However, certain limitations became apparent. The researchers had limited experience in conducting empirical investigations. Research designs, study instruments, the training of the field staff, and techniques of data analysis left much to be desired. Except for the qualitative studies of social anthropologists and the contributions of the economists in some areas, almost all these ventures, in spite of the legitimate motivations that inspired them, were substandard. The methodological and conceptual poverty of many of the studies renders them unreliable as a base for cumulative research.

Nevertheless, some good came out of them. They demonstrated that empirical studies required a level of competence that did not come naturally in the course of classroom teaching. They also created an awareness that much was wrong with training in the social sciences. Experience with the use of methodological tools developed in the West led to a realization that they cannot be copied for the local conditions. Thus, there grew a more realistic approach to the borrowing of research tools developed elsewhere and the necessity to do the ground work toward establishing norms under the Indian conditions.

Another significant gain came as a reaction to research supported by foreign agencies. Those who were able to work out collaborative research relationship with foreign universities became the "haves" among colleagues. Criticism of their activities appeared in the guise of warning against the dangers of foreign collaboration to national interests, on the one hand, and doubts about the utility of such researches to nation-building activities, on the other. Unfortunately, the criticisms did not centre on the quality of work done or the potential for establishing modern research practices in India. Subsequently, two developments appeared: one resulted in the screening of foreign

financed projects by the Government and the other in making collaborative research clearly and directly relevant to national problems. Both these trends created compulsions leading to the formulation of a policy for the support of social science research. Furthermore, the disapproval of one party domination in foreign sponsored researches, shared equally by Indian and foreign scholars, led to a new concept of collaboration in which both parties not only became equal partners but also debated the questions of research objectives and research design as against following a predetermined work procedure.

The second trend becomes visible in the late fifties with the coming into being of a number of specialized social science institutes and centres. This was the time when the community development movement had reached its peak. The efforts of the Programme Evaluation Organisation and the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission, and others, generated a good deal of research in the area of social change in general, and of community development in particular. The problem of population growth brought about the establishment of demographic research centres, and the need to accelerate the acceptance of family limitation methods led to the sponsorship of client studies on a large scale. Investigations in the area of social welfare such as illiteracy, poverty, and health also received encouragement. Public administration was given an independent identity either within the traditional political science framework or by the creation of separate institutions. The study of management, which could not be adequately nourished within the commerce faculty of the universities, was strengthened by setting up of management institutions for training and research. Finally, the field of political development, which had been touched upon by earlier researches, attracted pointed attention because of its inherent importance and also on account of the collateral developments in the area of public administration, on the one hand, and social change, on the other.

While some of the research during this period was of an indifferent character, there was a significant departure from the past. The awareness that earlier performance was unsatisfactory resulted in efforts towards improvement. A good deal of research activity found a base outside the universities. Research was directed towards the problems of national development with a sense of accountability to the sponsor and to the profession. Thus, even though the quality of the researches could have been better, the researchers raised important questions and attempted to answer them. Indeed, some of the work done in the broad area of social change, economic development, and political behaviour is likely to serve as a usable base for future researches.

The third trend becomes visible in the middle sixties. The gap between national goals and actual achievements led to an examination of the structures created to achieve them. The Planning Commission, the community development organization, the administrative organization of the Government, the system of education, among others, were subjected to a critical review. This extensive soul-searching had its impact on the development of social science research. The most important single development was the creation of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) as a body committed to the development of social science research in India.* The Council is not merely a funding agency, but, more important, it has become a national forum

*This may be an over statement because the contribution of individuals in the formation of the ICSSR has also been considerable.

for the expression of views about problems that exercise the minds of the social scientists. The review of the literature in the various social science disciplines carried out recently, and the current emphasis on training in research methodology, are endeavours relevant to the perceived deficiencies in the growth of social sciences in the past.

There now appears to be a trend to move away both from the micro-level analysis, such as is characteristic of attitude change studies, and the comparative global studies of the anthropologists, such as the village researches, to the study of operative organizational structures and their dynamics. There is a growing interest in studies on administrative organization, bureaucracy, and socio-political institutions. There is a trend to view social policy in a developmental perspective and to bring a holistic point of view to bear on the process of development. Social scientists seem to be moving toward intermediate level generalizations and theory building.

To sum up, while it seems that applied research has dominated the social sciences since independence, attempts at the systematisation of research findings have been few. Serious attempts at theory building and definitive studies of development problems have still to take place. Yet, there is a movement towards them. The social sciences seem poised to effect a break from the intellectual traditions of the West and from their own not-so-consequential activities of the past.

EVALUATION OF TRENDS

The past investments in research have accomplished two important results. First, they have enabled social scientists to research in areas which could not have been supported by the universities. Second, social scientists have moved into the direction of applied research and have acquired a level of maturity through sheer experience. The trend now emerging shows interest in macro-level phenomena. Such studies will probably make an enduring contribution both to theory and to the application of knowledge to the problems of nation-building.

The need to raise the general level of competence of the social scientists in quantitative research has been felt all along. This involves training not only in the experimental methods but also in the planning and management of research. Also required is research on research methodology. A good deal of work is needed for the operationalization of research variables through the development of tests and scales.

Social science research has been too closely identified with the dominant issues of the times. Had some significant questions been answered or solutions arrived at, there would be no ground for criticism. But researches have had little policy impact. Even the contributions towards the development of the social science disciplines have not been significant. The question naturally arises as to the utility of research which has neither contributed substantially to the problems of development nor to the enrichment of the social sciences. A research policy directed towards the cumulation of knowledge and increasing competence in applied research is required.

PROBLEMS FACING THE GROWTH OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

A number of criticisms have been made of the researches carried out by Indian social scientists. These centre round such points as their failure to choose significant problems

for research; basic methodological deficiencies; lack of sophistication in research design and data analysis; indiscriminate selection of research topics on a wide scale rather than concentration on significant problems; and the lack of rigour in the synthesis of knowledge and inadequate attempts at theory building. Some feel that research reports are padded with tables and percentages without talking about the "thing" that lies behind the numbers; others are critical of the highly subjective and qualitative studies which leave one uncertain about the objectivity of the findings. Still others are greatly concerned about the lack of relevance of research to existing social or national problems while some are equally concerned about the lack of basic research which alone can provide a firm base for the development of the social sciences.

Even if these criticisms are valid, they are symptoms rather than the causes of the state of affairs characterising social science research in India. The basic malady seems to lie in the inability to arrive at a balanced combination of inputs in terms of research talent, finance, and institutional support for creating an enduring base for the growth of research as an activity and as a profession. Four major problems of social science research in India are identified and discussed below:

1. Limitations of the system of high education;
2. Failure to legitimize research as a profession;
3. Failure to establish self-generating research institutions; and
4. Failure to provide long-term support to research activities.

Limitations of the System of Higher Education. The system of higher education in India is still based on the concept of knowledge as static rather than growing. Creativity is not a dominant value. Prescribed syllabi, the use of antiquated textbooks, and the system of external examination create an environment that does not challenge the scholar either to innovate or to keep up with the latest developments in his field. Over the years, the educational system has succeeded in alienating the teacher from scholarship and the student from the educational process. The social science departments in the universities have not yet been able to create a culture favourable to research. Few of them have research funds of their own. Scholars who are successful in attracting research money from outside sources are expected to carry out research as an overtime activity. Even though the publication of articles and books is taken into account at the time of promotion and provide a strong incentive to those who have not yet "arrived", the lack of a strong peer culture to judge the value of scholarly contributions has tended to emphasize quantity over quality. Positive encouragement for research to scholars having strong research inclinations through reduced teaching loads for specified periods of time is rarely done. The interaction between teaching and research that has led to the development of distinctive schools of thought in the West is yet a distant dream. Even doctoral research which could energize scholarship suffers from the inertia at present characteristic of the universities. In fact, the universities have become almost exclusively identified with routine teaching. Therefore, until such time as research can acquire a place of equal importance with teaching it can hardly be expected to grow in its natural home in the university. There are indeed some exceptions. Some scholars are known to have generated a good deal of research interest among younger colleagues. But these are still one-man shows and often short-

lived. Whatever research is carried out in the centres of higher learning lacks continuity and vigour.

Failure to Establish Research as a Legitimate Profession. Crippled in its natural habitat, research has still to acquire the dignity of a profession. Not that it is considered unimportant or that the researchers suffer from an inferiority complex. Rather, research has not yet found a home and the researcher a status.

In research institutions, except for the director of research or the project director, the other members of the team are rather non-descript. Their status is not differentiated under the commonly understood nomenclatures, readers and lecturers, or associate and assistant professors. With each project is associated a floating population of research assistants whose existence is project-based. At the termination of the project their services are discontinued unless they can be transferred to a new project. There is considerable pressure on the project director to acquire additional finance for any kind of activity consistent with the institutional charter both in the interest of continuity of research and for preventing experienced personnel from being rendered jobless. Since the recurring grant at the disposal of these institutions is inadequate to support research on a viable scale, funds for new researches are negotiated to coincide with the date of completion of an earlier project. Obviously, a team of workers cannot be kept idle for a substantial period of time. Work on new projects is usually initiated before the report on the previous one has been finalized for publication and the potentialities of the data have been adequately explored in additional research papers. The scholars in these research institutions have a growing backlog of work even if they succeed in meeting deadlines set by the sponsors. There is hardly any time left to follow up ideas for analysis suggested by the earlier researches, or to systematically explore the research implications for application and theory. Thus, the research institutions that have had some measure of success in contributing to the legitimization of research as a profession live a hand to mouth existence. The conditions of uncertainty under which they function and the enormous pressures that operate on the project director and the research team are symptomatic of the weak foundation that supports the profession of research in the social sciences in India today.

In training-eum-research institutions, the research function is usually subsidiary to teaching. For various reasons, the organizational climate tends to be comparable to that existing in the universities. In others, the notable exceptions, research occupies a place of equal importance along with teaching. Some of these institutions have also contributed to the professionalization of research. However, the quality of research contribution is unpredictable. By and large, the conditions under which research is carried out do not permit persistent efforts in a given direction required for high quality performance.

Failure to Promote Self-generating Research. A critical factor in the growth of research is interaction between scholars leading to the accumulation of knowledge, its synthesis, and in theory building. This cannot happen unless the quest for new knowledge becomes a self-generating activity. This, in turn, requires investment on creative scholarship on a long-term basis. Significant researches promote scholarly exchanges and also the development of new concepts and hypotheses. The inability to sustain

such interactions around an institutional base is one of the most important reasons for the present state of affairs in social science research.

In the last decade or so, conferences and seminars have greatly facilitated scholarly exchanges between researchers distributed over a wide geographical area. Desirable as this development is, it can in no way match the quality of scholarly interactions that occur within an institution and the imperatives these create for the accumulation and growth of knowledge through research. The relevance of a "critical mass" of researchers and of institutional viability as the prerequisites for the growth of research have so far not been clearly appreciated. The favoured strategy of research development, namely, short-term sponsored projects is at best a device for stimulating the researcher. It does not help create a supportive institutional environment either in terms of attracting and developing talent or providing adequate administrative and financial support for research. It should be realized, however, that high quality research on a sizable scale is unlikely to occur as long as researchers of recognized potential do not find in their own place of work adequate opportunities and challenges to vigorously pursue their professional interests.

Failure to Provide Long-term Support for Research. Another important reason why the social science research has not come of age is the unavailability of long-term financial support. Project grants of a one or two year duration do not permit planned growth in a given area. It is sometimes said that there is no dearth of money for worthwhile research. In fact, research grants sometimes remain unutilized or are spent with great difficulty. Yet, it is well-known that a number of scholars and institutions are unsuccessful in obtaining research money. It seems just as inappropriate to ascribe the inability to use research funds to the non-availability of research scholars as to conclude that the non-availability of funds does not limit the growth of research. The important thing is that the funding agencies and the researchers have not been able to establish institutionalized relationships. In the absence of a firm research tradition which would have thrown up a number of research institutions identifiable for their particular orientation and competence, a peculiar mix of "ad-hocism" and necessity characterizes both the request for research funds and its sanction.

TOWARDS AN ACTION STRATEGY

A distinction should be made between remedial action to stimulate growth and foundation level operations to create the conditions favourable to growth. In terms of action strategy, the former assumes the existence of a satisfactory operational base which can be suitably stimulated for improved performance while the latter aims at the very creation of such a base. Previous discussions have implied the necessity of foundation level operations to promote the growth of the social sciences. Remedial action such as is implied in the current policies of the ICSSR is at best likely to result in short-term gains. Even five to ten years hence the social sciences are likely to remain in more or less the same stage of development as they are today. In the meantime, valuable resources would have been spent in exchange for a few good studies without strengthening the institutional base for research or the quality of the researcher.

The strategy that is being advocated involves an exercise in institution-building. A serious attempt should be made to locate a few centres that have distinct possibilities of growth. Some institutions or groups are already turning out good work or are capable of doing so. An all out attempt to strengthen them needs to be made. Selective investment in three to four such institutions in the country as a whole should be a worthwhile undertaking. However, it is not recommended that this mode of operation can exclude existing project-based support which has merits of its own.

Institution-building in a developing country is a rather difficult task. A charter, a building, assured financial support, and a few individuals do not make an institution. They are the pre-requisites, nothing more. The critical factors for the development of viable institutions are all those intangible factors that make a job likeable, that provide challenges and give the participants a time perspective for professional growth. This is where good management skills become necessary for institution-building. Such skills do not come naturally to people; and scholars, who tend to be individualistic and specialized are no exception.

ROLE OF THE ICSSR

The present state of social science research in India requires a different approach to their development than that adopted by Social Science Research Council (SSRC) of the United States. The SSRC provides "aid to individuals, never to institutions". According to Herring (1970), the SSRC is best understood :

as a partner to the universities and other research institutions in facilitating communication among specialists and helping to implement research and training ventures that cannot be encompassed within a given institution because of their exploratory or experimental character.

This role of the SSRC appears quite appropriate given the advanced state of development of the social sciences in the United States. The Council provides the extra inputs that encourage innovation, aid better communication between scholars, and generally support scholarly activity in promising new areas.

Such investments, however, assume a level of maturity in the social sciences that does not, in fact, exist in India today. These efforts will, therefore, not have an additive effect on development because of the inadequacy of the base that supports such growth. The time has yet to come when the support given to individual scholars, or the development of special areas of interest, will sustain qualitative improvements in the social sciences. In India, therefore, efforts to provide a firm foundation to social science research must precede or occur along with attempts at developing new areas or assisting promising exploratory ventures.

APPLIED VERSUS BASIC RESEARCH

It is argued that in a country like India, having limited resources, research should be given a practical orientation. Researches that do not have apparent relevance to the solution of practical problems are considered as unnecessary luxury. The contrary

point of view asserts that in the absence of sound analytical concepts, there are obvious limitations to the extent to which applied research is possible. Not only will the lack of conceptual refinement impoverish analysis and limit methodological sophistication but will also result in a constricted perception of cause and effect relationships.

Unless applied research is taken to mean the publication of facts through simplistic tables of percentages and averages, which can be done on the existing capital of the social sciences in India, there is no gainsaying the fact that basic research is essential for the development of applied research. Apart from the fact that basic research does not have application as its immediate goal, the two are deeply interrelated, particularly in the case of the social sciences whose concepts and theories derive from the analysis of social reality as an on-going process. Research designed to diagnose social reality, and to introduce correctives for the achievement of goals, uses a theoretical base no less than it helps enrich it.

Thus, the difference between basic and applied research is not as sharp as that between the applied and theoretical social scientists. To illustrate, survey research can be taken as an example of "pure" applied research. However, few surveys fail to lend themselves to generalizations germane to theory building. Whether such attempts are actually made depends upon the training and professional orientation of the researcher. In such areas as organizational performance, inter-group conflicts, the administration of and response to social change, the opportunities for testing hypotheses and for theory building are enormous. Perhaps the seriousness with which the distinction between theoretical and applied research is made will be lost as more and more Indian social scientists acquire competence in quantitative research methodology.

Both basic and applied research have an important part in the development of the social sciences and must be supported. However, in view of the needs of a developing country, theoretically sophisticated applied researches that promise further refinement of concepts, tools, and theories should be encouraged.

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH PRIORITY

From the standpoint of efficient utilization of resources it may be useful to distinguish researches in terms of whether they serve short-term or long-term objectives or both. For example, a study of communal violence or the acceptance of contraceptives has short-term objectives insofar as it helps in the understanding of an existing situation along with its implications for action. These researches may also be supported as part of a long-term strategy to encourage research projects on social integration or family planning communication. Long-term strategy would require the support of different research projects on a particular theme for a number of years.

While both kinds of undertakings need to be supported, long-term commitment introduces an element of inflexibility in terms of the availability of resources for competing activities. It consequently raises the question of priority, that is, what research areas should be taken up for long-term support? The assessment of priorities is essentially a subjective matter, for it reflects one's personal and professional bias. There is little likelihood of consensus on a short list of priorities. With these considerations in view, a few themes that seem relevant for research in the near future are suggested:

1. Institution-building and institutional performance.

2. Impact of national policies and programmes on development. Implications for policy.
3. Social, psychological, and economic factors of growth. Management of change.
4. Economic, social, and political mobilization. Implications for social development.
5. Social tension and conflicts: sources and consequences. Implications for social action.
6. Citizen's needs and aspirations, and their fulfilment. Implications of social deprivation for social/national identification.
7. Socio-cultural factors in personality development and character structure. Implications for organizational functioning and management.

The themes listed above have relevance to national problems. They are interdisciplinary, accommodate a wide range of interests, and are open to both theoretical and applied research.

UTILIZATION OF RESEARCH

In spite of the close identification of social science research with the problems of development, the utilization of research findings has not been extensive and its impact on policy has been minimal. The question naturally arises: how can better utilization of research be brought about?

It should be pointed out that all applied research is not necessarily directed towards social action although it has implications for action. Much of social science research in India has aimed at "fact-finding" rather than at "problem-solving". A useful distinction could therefore be made between researches that generate information and knowhow and those that aim at problem-solving. In the case of the former, additional efforts are required to reduce findings to specific action propositions. Problem-solving researches alone can be readily translated into action.

The main obstacle to the utilization of research, however, is not the lack of communication between the user and the researcher. Rather, the lack of faith in the utility of research findings and the inability to act upon them limits the use of research. The government agencies, even though the largest providers of research funds, are rather closed-minded and conventional in their posture toward change. Their capacity to innovate is tamed by a belief in collective wisdom based on experience and also by potential exogeneous forces. Solutions based on intuitive insights along with the compulsions of social philosophy and the exigencies of the political reality continue to guide administrative innovations and policy changes.

Certain limitations apply to the social scientists as well. In addition to professional competence, applied research requires expertise based on actual experience. Opportunities for the growth of such expertise have, by and large, not existed. The user, therefore, cannot be blamed for being skeptical of the recommendations of people who apparently lack credibility. Mention may also be made of the fact that problem-solving researches do not necessarily attract the best social scientists. Thus, limitations applying both to the user and the researcher explain the restricted utilization of research.

Under the circumstances, it seems that utilization of social science research for problem-solving or policy formulation depends primarily upon the initiative of the user, whether it is the government or industry. Social scientists are not in a position to impose themselves on agencies that are not prepared to receive their contributions. Nor are they in a position to confront the administrators and policy-makers on terms of equality. However, there is much that the social scientists have to do by way of establishing a research tradition and helping create expertise in different disciplines. The generation of knowledge in different areas of development is bound to induce a climate favourable to the utilization of research.

In particular, attempts have to be made to establish a closer link between the user and the researcher. This will bring about an appreciation of the kinds of research that could be useful to the user and also result in better formulation of research problems, in addition to helping the social scientists gain credibility in the eyes of the users.

The ICSSR could play the role of a mediator between research institutions and the funding agencies. Systematic exploration of research needs with potential users should help clarify areas in which support is available. Concrete steps to make research findings available to scholars and users, and planned interaction between them through conferences and consultations, would be steps in the right direction.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Two questions were raised in the beginning of this paper. First, whether the social sciences have grown in a satisfactory manner and, second, whether they are capable of making significant contributions to the problems of development. It was pointed out that the social sciences still have a long way to go before reaching a stage of development required for the role they are expected to play. The ICSSR could help bring about desired results by investing resources in foundation-level operations aimed at generating self-sustained growth rather than in remedial operations with the objective of promoting growth in selected areas. Lasting contribution to the growth of research can at this stage be made through institution-building activities rather than by rescue operations. It is believed that once a firm foundation is laid, new areas of interest will automatically emerge, both applied and theoretical research will be strengthened, and parallel advances in the area of research methodology will occur.

Under the present circumstances, the universities are not in a position to sustain the growth of research. In fact, even the teaching function is not being performed satisfactorily. The question therefore is: Should research be left to grow as it has in the past or should something special be done to strengthen it? It is felt that a few promising research institutions or groups, in or outside the university framework, should be supported so that the research function, vital both for the generation of knowledge and its application, does not stagnate. The interactive relationship between teaching and research must eventually be established not only in the interest of research but in the interest of higher education as a whole.

Research has a growth dynamics of its own. It requires sizable long-term investments without the expectation of immediate gains. Since resources are limited, a research policy based on an appreciation of the optimal scale of operation is urgently

required. Major contributions to research will not come from scholars working in isolation with time-bound funds but from institution-based individual and team effort in an intellectually challenging environment consisting of colleagues from allied disciplines.

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Role of Social Sciences in India: A Sociology of Knowledge*

IN THIS essay my attempt is to analyse the role and relevance of social sciences in India from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge. I feel that an objective evaluation of the role and relevance of social sciences in our country often fails because of an assumed international 'reference model'. This not only distorts our perspective of evaluation but also tends artificially to detach the evaluative measures from their historicity and existential moorings. In order to lend adequate objectivity and realism to this evaluation, it should be delinked from the so-called international "reference model".

Often this lack of objectivity and realism leads social scientists to project either too pessimistic or too rosy and optimistic a view of Indian social science. Those who take a pessimistic view do so on the criteria of high social science productivity and theoretically advanced countries. These are presumed by such social scientists to be essential for satisfactory social science growth but unachievable in India for a long time to come. Hence their pessimism about Indian social science. This ethnocentric frame of evaluation automatically places social sciences of the advanced countries in a position of superiority. The interesting point is that this superiority is not judged on the basis of conceptual creativity but on grounds of technical virtuosity achieved in the advanced countries. The position of the "optimist" evaluators of the Indian social science though apparently divergent is structurally similar to that of the pessimists. Only the quality of perception is different and not its coordinates. The progress in social science is identified by the optimists with the growth in the infra-structure of Indian social sciences, such as the professional associations, numbers of journals, publications and researches making use of 'methods and techniques' of the Western social sciences. Optimism is further reinforced by citing evidences of the availability of funds for research from various official and semi-official sources. The establishment of the ICSSR and ICHR should hopefully make their case stronger still.

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Pessimism or optimism about the social sciences and their role in India is thus derived from the conscious or unconscious choice of the international "reference model". It postulates an evolutionary universalism for social sciences in all societies. It lacks, however, the appreciation of the historical and structural forces which contributed to the growth and differentiation of the metaphysical and religious world-view of the medieval European society and to the social science revolution in that continent (Stark, 1958). It also neglects the fact that the social science "reference model" is itself a historical product, and cannot be treated purely on the plane of value-neutrality or of academic universalism. Even though we may not deny the contributions made by the Western social sciences, especially by social anthropology and sociology in discovering many universal forms of social and cultural adaptations of mankind,—such as the kinship rules, family structure and incest taboos, the rudimentary division of labour, system of exchange and institutionalization of norms of social order, socialization and perpetuation of symbolic systems in societies,—the crucial question which assumes significance for the social sciences in the new nations is not germane to these universal structure or culture but to the historically specific adaptations and changes in each.

The relationship between the conceptual and methodological baggage of the Western social science and its relevance to an understanding of the historico-specific problems of various societies lies in the domain of the sociology of knowledge. We may identify this in the extent to which the emergence of social science in the West lent support to and was aided by the basic transformations in the social structure of Western countries. This has been well established for disciplines like sociology and social anthropology. The growth of these disciplines coincided broadly with stages of significant social transformations in the European society. These transformations changed the coordinates of relationships, as it were, between person and society. The essential aspects of these transformations were: the breakdown of the feudal and ecclesiastical structure of power, emergence of new professional and mercantile classes, secularization of the world-view of society through discoveries in science and technology, unprecedented industrial growth, commercial expansion and colonization due to application of science and technology to the sphere of production. The social sciences were the product of the two revolutionary movements in the European society, one cultural which was long in the making and the other industrial, which initiated radical changes in the social system.

A society which faced changes of such historic and revolutionary dimensions as Europe did at the turn of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries should naturally be disposed to over-optimism and to adventure; the higher stakes in adventure and its uncertainties, however, might also generate anxiety. This intermix of the spirit of adventure with feeling of collective anxiety creates the social need to establish and project a new world-view and a new socio-cultural identity. The social sciences, particularly economics, sociology and social anthropology, indeed emerged as responses to this need. The wider acceptability of social sciences was probably also related to the fact that these offered an alternative world-view, ideology and socio-cultural identity. The social sciences, however, did not offer a single paradigm to replace the older disintegrating world-view. The problem being complex, a number of alternative or even competing paradigms were formulated by social scientists but these had a remarkable ideological unity. We may find it in the utilitarian positivism of Adam Smith and

Jeremy Bentham, in the radical positivism of J. Turgot, Candorcet and August Comte and in the moral evolutionism of Immanuel Kant. The reigning god of the time was of course positivism. Its ideology harmonised well with the need both for new socio-cultural identity and ethos conforming to the spirit of adventure of the time. The paradigms of social science at this stage were based on value-premises of rationalism and ideological optimism.

In course of time became manifest the negative effects of rapid industrialisation, of commercial and colonial expansion, such as largescale uprooting of the rural masses, growth of urban destitutes and inhuman exploitation of child and woman labour in mines and factories. These problems could not be explained away by the theories of utilitarian or radical positivism or by the postulates of rationalism. How could 'rational' capitalism inflict so much misery upon man in the process of its growth? The eighteenth and the early nineteenth century paradigms of social science were thus deeply shaken. First the theory of Karl Marx and later that of Sigmund Freud emerged as revolutionary alternatives which led to the disintegration of earlier social science paradigms. The thesis of universal rationality both for the person and society was thus basically reversed. Karl Marx postulated the theory not only of human alienation but also that of collective classirrationality. The inversion of paradigms took place at many levels: the conception of progress through evolutionary stages was replaced by that of periodical revolutionary convulsions owing to irrational growth of social structures; the thesis of social equilibrium was substituted by postulates of inherent conflict causing perpetual disequilibrium of social systems; the idea of progress was now replaced by that of alienation by Marx, and 'repression' by Freud who, though not a contemporary of Marx, was closer to him in revolutionising the paradigms of social science. This fundamental inversion of social science paradigms would have been commensurate with the ideological needs of the European society but for the extremism in its formulations. The need was not for inversion but for synthesis of paradigms. Both Marx and Freud did not satisfy this need as their paradigms represented too radical a departure from the ideology of colonial expansion and adventurous industrialism. Eventually, Emile Durkheim in France and Max Weber in Germany accomplished this synthesis and formulated sociological paradigms which were in tune with the ideological needs of that time. Durkheim preserved the Marxist emphasis on sociologicistic determinism but without his theory of revolutionary paraxis; Weber in contradistinction to Marx maintained that capitalism was a rational system but agreed with Marx in characterizing it as de-humanizing. Indeed, Weber ends his discussion on the spirit of capitalism with a deeply sceptical note. He remarks: "for the last stage of this cultural development it might well be truly said: specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved" (Weber, 1965:182).

I have undertaken the above analysis only to demonstrate the existential link existing between the growth of a theoretical construct and its acceptance in social science. This existential linkage is provided by the changing historical forces and bases of social structure of a country or a group of countries. This is proved not only historically but also logically by the nature of the social science development so far. Indeed, there are many metaconceptual systems in social science that enjoy the power of generality being abstractions over reality. But is it appropriate to treat them as "general laws"

about social processes and directions of change? In fact, most paradigms of social science tend to be ideological rather than explanatory systems and most social science theories continue to remain “normative” and “metaphysical” rather than analytic. No doubt such theories have their scientific relevance but their limitations are often overlooked at the cost of objectivity.

The role of social science in India should be evaluated, taking this historical and existential approach to the growth of social sciences. An important corollary of the existential determination of social science paradigms is the absurdity of sanctifying the international ‘reference model’ and the ‘peer group’ ideology. One may ask: what is the logical or substantive relevance of social science paradigms developed in a different historical context for another country which is historically and existentially different? The contexts of this relevance could be tested at three levels: the meta-conceptual, the methodological and the substantive. One might argue that as we move from meta-conceptual to methodological and substantive levels of social science formulations the cross-societal validity of categories goes on diminishing; for instance, at the substantive level the phenomena being bound by time and space, they do not offer parallels with other societies. At the methodological level, however, with the exception of some tools and techniques having purely formal character, (such as logico-mathematical and statistical laws and operations), most other components can hardly be treated as universally valid. Paradoxically, however, it is not these formal techniques but the substantive residues of methodological techniques which are culture-bound, that have enriched the Western social science and increased its relevance for that society.

At the level of meta-concepts, however, it is argued by many social scientists that concepts being in the nature of formal constructs have a universal or cross-national relevance. Although it may seem logical, there are serious limitations to the validity of this argument. Firstly, the meta-concepts such as “individual”, “person”, “social structure”, “reference group”, “culture”, etc., are not merely abstractions of a societal phenomenon but also form its substantive reality. Indian sociologists have long argued that many meta-concepts of social sciences derived from the West do not have relevance for the Indian society since these are abstractions from a different culture. D. P. Mukerji criticised the assumption of the “actor-situation” based theory of Talcott Parsons “for the simple reason that the unit of the Indian social system is not the individual as actor”, but one that is “inherently structured on a normative, teleological” but not on a “voluntaristic system of coordinates or axes” (Mukerji, 1958: 231-32). The same argument has later been elaborated by Louis Dumont who denies the existence of “individual” as a category in the Indian tradition. The tenability of cross-national equivalence of most meta-concepts of the social sciences is also in dispute because of the inherent need for value-judgements in most social science formalizations of theory.

If we go by two essential characteristics of science, relevance and scientific quality, it would appear that most social science propositions involve value-judgements and value-preferences, first on the issue of the definition of relevance and secondly, on the formulation and test of hypotheses. Even in the natural sciences, the preferences for alternate hypotheses are guided by various kinds of value-preferences of the individual scientists. Furfey writes:

Sometimes a hypothesis may prove acceptable because it pictures the facts in a concrete way that appeals to the imagination. Doubtless this was one of the reasons that made the Bohr atom popular. Sometimes scientists accept a theory because it promises to be "fertile", that is able to suggest still further theories. All in all, it is evident that "scientific quality" is not a simple thing. Acceptance of a hypothesis is seldom imposed forcibly by facts. Normally acceptance depends on a series of delicate value-judgements (Furfey, 1956: 515).

The social science methods and theories thus lack universalism not only on account of their being historical by-products of the needs of specific societies for new identities and rationalizations but also because the structure of their propositions involves inherent value-premises that are culturally derived. It could well be illustrated if we consider only a selected number of theoretical constructs that have been formulated in social sciences during the past three decades. Take, for instance, the "reference group theory", "balance theory", "exchange theory", "social consensus or functional theory", "cognitive dissonance theory" and the theory of "civic culture and political socialization" etc. The influence of these theories out-crosses the domain of one particular discipline or one particular national society. Each of these "theoretical" formulations has been given elaborate formal or quasi-formal shape and corresponding to each formulation, a methodological or technical repertoire has also been developed to test the postulates derived from it.

Yet, if we apply the test of relevance and scientific quality to these theories we would discover that the assumptions and value premises implicit in them fulfil the ideological needs of a particular type of social system, particularly the affluent Western society. It is meaningful that most of these theoretical formulations have come from the American social science and conform to a model of society based on plenty rather than poverty, exchange rather than exploitation, consensus rather than conflict, value rather than power, imitative mobility (reference group) rather than class conflict or collective mobilization. They focus upon balance rather than breakdown or contradiction in the social system. One may again observe a close relationship between the needs of a world-view and socio-cultural identity of a particular country and the types of social science theorization.

The above in my opinion not only exposes the weakness of the universalistic assumptions of the nature of social science and the falsity of the ideology of an 'international reference model' but also provides a contextual frame for evaluating the role of social science and the direction of its growth in the Indian society. This leads us to the next question: How far have social sciences responded to the various phases of social-structural transformation in India and the corresponding needs of a world-view and socio-cultural identity of their own society? How far have the existential conditions in India influenced their growth? This necessitates an analysis of the responses of Indian social science to the major historical and structural transformation of Indian society.

In trying to answer the above questions I confine myself to the discipline of sociology about which I can speak with some degree of familiarity. Before doing so, it is necessary to identify some of the important landmarks of historical-structural transitions of the Indian society which could be treated as existential forces necessitating changes in social

science paradigms in India. As we mentioned above, structural variations in the life of a society are marked by periods of identity crisis. In the modern period one could roughly identify three well-defined phases of structural change in the Indian society viz., the establishment of the British-colonialist regime in India and the disintegration of the native regimes; the emergence of national consciousness and of the anti-colonial struggle; and the achievement of independence and the consequent stimulus to nation-building and social reconstruction. Each of these three historical phases generated specific types of identity problems.

The British rule brought about a series of major changes in the structure of Indian society through its fiscal, agrarian and socio-political policies. Its land settlement policies caused serious social cleavages in many parts of the country. Its fiscal and administrative policies created new professional and commercial classes and strongly disrupted the rule of the traditional feudal elite. All this happened roughly during the 18th and 19th centuries, but sociology and social anthropology at that time did not reflect the tensions of social transformation and crisis of identity that must have generated tremors throughout the Indian social system. It is only now that historians are reconstructing some of the social change profiles of that period. It may probably be no exaggeration to say that the challenge to cultural identity that British colonialism posed to India was met not by professional social scientists but by literatures, social reformers and political agitators. The cultural elites generated a series of reform movements in Bengal, northern Punjab and other parts of country. At the cultural level the response to the challenge of colonialism at that time was often defensive, leading either to glorification of the past or its denigration. The growth of social sciences was rudimentary in the form of ethnography of selected segments of the Indian social structure undertaken by British administrators and European missionaries. These administrators looked at the Indian social reality from the value premises of utilitarian positivism which was their own dominant cultural tradition of the time. The traces of this may be found in the writing of Henry Maine, Baden-Powell, and Max Weber. Even Marx was for a long time under the spell of these ethnocentric interpretations of the Indian society, which as an ideology lent support to the "white man's burden" thesis and provided rationalisation of colonialism in India.

The role of social sciences in India has been historically conditioned by this fact that not the professional social scientists but the cultural and political elites first responded to the challenge of colonialism and the threat to Indian identity. Social science in India not only lagged behind in responding to this challenge but in fact evaded it for long. Social scientists, of course, could not be blamed for this since social science as a profession itself was a by-product of the colonial impact, rather than of the anti-colonial struggle. But it did give a tilt to the social role and relevance of social sciences. Unfortunately, social scientists have taken this historical legacy of their passive role unquestioningly and without much effort to change it. This negative element in the historical development of social sciences has deeply influenced their role and relevance in the subsequent phases of social change in India.

Historically, the building blocks both of social anthropology and sociology in India are derived from the Western colonialist interpretations of the Indian society. The ideological bias of this interpretation was towards exaggerating the segmentary and pluralistic foci of the Indian society at the cost of integrative and macro-sociological

elements. Each village was treated as a "republic" and each caste, tribe and community as a "sub-nation". Thus the great bulk of the 19th century social scientific studies in India originating from Western sources (with the exception of the meta-physical and Indological studies of the orientalists) were oriented not towards affirming but towards denying the identity of India as a nation.

The emergence of social anthropology and sociology as formal disciplines in Indian universities in early twentieth century did bear a deep imprint of the earlier colonial ethnographic and social interpretative writings. The structural hiatus between caste and tribe, which was a colonial gift to Indian social science, and a cultural reaction to missionary zeal, got established into the tradition of Indian sociology and social anthropology. Thus, sociology got totally out of touch with crucial issues concerning India's struggle for establishing its own national identity and for consolidating its newly-won freedom. The issues relating to the structural transformation of the Indian society such as abolition of the feudal system and agrarian transformation, identification of the areas of social and cultural reforms and nation-building etc. become once again the concern only of the political and cultural elites.

Thus, colonialism historically conditioned the paradigms of the Indian social science by making its conceptual frame-work fragmentary and non-systemic. For instance, the tendency to conduct studies of tribes as distinct entities, unrelated to the structures of caste, of villages unrelated to urban centres, and of communities independent of the national society become more and more pronounced in Indian sociology. This dominated not only the academic field but deeply influenced also the tribal and other social policies of the government. By such conceptual and substantive fragmentation, Indian social science was further alienated from the dynamics of Indian society and deprived of the stimulus for an innovative elan. Imitative social science tradition in India was a logical result of this fragmentation of sociological apperception. This also generated a deep sense of ambivalence towards Western social science in the consciousness of the Indian social scientists. Radhakamal Mukerjee's writings, which established him as a sociologist of renown correspond quite closely with trends of sociological writings in the West particularly in the USA. Yet he also stated in his *Foundations of Indian Economics* (Mukerjee, 1916 : 339) that "the attempt to force systems and methods of industrial organization, economic arrangements, and institutions which have admirably suited a different geographical environment, will always be futile".

The paradox of national self-awareness on the one hand and of dependence upon Western traditions of social science on the other has conditioned the type of contributions that Indian social scientists have been able to make in response to the problems of national identity and change in India. No doubt, some social scientists did show keen awareness of the intellectual constraints of colonialism on the Indian social science paradigms. I may especially mention D.P. Mukerji in this context. G.S. Ghurye (1963) also shows an acute awareness of the problem in his work on tribe-caste relationship when he rejects the structural autonomy thesis introjected by the Westerners. But all these currents of social science during the freedom movement remained feeble and fell far short of consolidating an autonomous and a realistic tradition of Indian social science.

Social science faced a new responsibility and a new challenge in India after independence. The identity need of the nation also underwent a major change. Moreover, social science now suddenly began to receive state patronage through institutions like the UGC and RPC of the Planning Commission. The problem of nation-building threw up issues of interest to sociologists and social anthropologists: One might ask: did this major historical change influence the social science paradigms in India? Did social science mobilize itself to tackle the crucial issues of national consolidation and identity? The answer would by and large be in the negative. The post-independence social science continued its involvement with fragmentary categories for analysing Indian social structure. Village studies became more popular; there was proliferation of RPC-sponsored urban surveys and other ad hoc studies. But none of these touched upon the crucial issues such as the national profile of interacting social categories, their conflicts and deprivations and their role in nation-building; the questions of social inequality and of distributive justice, the large questions of national identity and nation-building, etc. The sociological studies of depressed sections and minorities especially of Muslims were mainly neglected.

It was only around the fifties that sociology and social anthropology in India began slowly to apply more systematic and indigenous models to Indian realities and to address itself to more relevant issues of national identity and problems of change. In sociology the contributions of D. P. Mukerji stand out clearly as a departure from the tradition of colonial sociology. His analysis of the cultural challenges of colonialism and the rise of new middle classes, his emphasis upon Indian tradition in undertaking a dialectical analysis of the processes of change and his appeal to Indian social scientists and students to respond with "a little dignity and a little pride" to Western scholars and to Western traditions of social science are examples of the emerging systemic and dialectical concerns of social sciences in India. Using a different model Srinivas formulated the concept of "Sanskritization and Westernization" to understand the processes of change at various levels of the Indian cultural systems and the processes of social mobility. Other social anthropologists also began to use the "little and great traditions" model not only to establish connections between various cultural sub-systems but also between hitherto compartmentalised structures like "tribe and caste". This led also to a period of debate and critical self-appraisal among Indian sociologists.

These developments have indeed started a healthier trend among Indian sociologists. But with a few exceptions the concern of the sociologists of the new generation continues to be culturological. The studies of ritual status and caste hierarchy were probably relevant in the colonial days. The crisis of identity under colonial domination was as much a crisis of values as that of power. The people's power being fragmented through feudalism and blocked through colonialism, the realm of values also offered an arena for self-search as also for mobility aspirations. In a free nation, however, the problem of identity shifts from values to that of power. Social categories, classes and communities seek access to power and this sets into motion new conflicts and consequently creates the need for structural changes in society and for new forms of structures and skills. These processes also bear a deeper relationship with historical events and regional and local identities. This underlines the need to shift the focus of social science studies from cultural to structural issues. These issues may not be identified simply by replacing

categories, such as caste by class, prestige by power or hierarchy by equality, as is becoming fashionable among some Indian social scientists.

Structural issues belong to the arena of "major polarization" of interest-groups in a society. These cannot be understood by the study of a single village or town even though done in a microscopic details. By its very nature structural issues have a wider character and coverage. Some such issues for our contemporary society may be identified as "cleavages" between rich and poor, between minority and majority, between younger and older generation, between the uncertain and sulking unemployed youth and the securely entrenched bureaucracy, between "national and regional levels of elites" and finally between professed ideology and feeble praxis. Such structural issues can be distinguished from others by the degree to which these form the sources of national anxiety. To analyze these forces models cannot be borrowed from abroad, although awareness of other models may enrich the insight of the social scientists.

Ironically, however, the current systemic orientation of the social sciences, is also derived from the Western sources. For instance, in political science the method of the "comparative politics" pioneered by a few American scholars has become a mark of distinction for Indian political scientists. Also, the study of the "voting behaviour" has been borrowed directly from the American model. Indeed, these studies have led to some relevant analysis of problems, but what is surprising is that paradigms have been borrowed without much debate or critical examination.

Hence, one might think that the Western 'reference model' continues to flourish in the Indian social sciences today as much as under the colonial regime. Indian social scientists did enter into periodical sessions of self-appraisal of their role and some thoughtful discussions have followed. But with very few exceptions most social scientists remain prisoners of the academic habits formed by their West-ward orientation in matters of conceptualization, selection of problems of selling the products of their research.

This brings me to the main question of this essay: what should be the role of social science and social scientists in contemporary India? My argument is not that we should give up the scientific spirit in social science researches and substitute ideology for it; it does not follow from my arguments developed so far. I affirm that the task of science is to offer explanations of social phenomena in terms of prediction of causal relationships among various events. This should also hold good for the social sciences. The universalism of social science, however, in my opinion, ends at this point—of formal structure and methodology. Beyond this, the nature of social science is governed by the historicity of societal conditions. This is most vividly borne out when we examine the value premises inherent in most social science theories and models. This is also revealed when we evaluate the value-preferences of social scientists in India in selection of one problem for research in preference over another. My argument is that whatsoever may be the sophistication achieved by a particular research endeavour, its problem selection and formulation of hypotheses is basically conditioned by the value-preferences of the researcher. This is a question of sociology of knowledge, the determinate relationship between the existential background of the social scientist and his perception of the relative importance of various problems. This aspect of science adds historical authenticity to social research.

The problem is also intimately related to the social background of social scientists and their social composition. In Europe the scientists and professional categories

emerged as a new social stratum unattached in the past existential moorings and structural networks. This group had a capacity to emphasise with the issues of national relevance. Their emergence followed the basic changes in the structure of the European society as a whole. In India, the existential background of the professional classes has its own peculiarities. It is still rooted in the past networks of traditional relationship, kinship ties and class and caste identities. A substantial number of unattached professionals has not yet emerged in India from the lower middle and lower strata of the Indian society. This coupled with the fact that basic structural transformations in the Indian society equivalent to those in the West at the time of the birth of social sciences have also not taken place doubly confounds the possibilities of the growth of a "responsive" social science. The Indian social science thus not only lacks the basic appreciative and emphatic character but is also frequently a victim of persuasions external to the norms of social science.

These structural characteristics of social scientists and social sciences in India have a confounding influence on its growth, because it renders social science only marginally responsible to society. Also, the public remains least reactive to the direction of its growth. This encourages social scientists to continue with their old habits in selection of problems for research and its methodologies. The social sciences lack an independent national self-image because of an institutionalised insulation from the mainstream of national consciousness. They are detached from the tradition of vigorous criticism and evaluation of the inherent value-presuppositions in most popular "theoretical" and "conceptual" models and priorities of research originating from foreign academics and academia. This character of Indian social science is conditioned, as I have analysed above, from the historical legacy of false 'reference model' among the social scientists on the one hand and the structural constraints of the social scientists owing to the slow pace of Indian social transformation itself on the other.

The implications of this analysis for the future strategy of social sciences in India are self-evident. Whereas we do not have to become cynical towards the internationally accepted norms of scientific objectivity, theoretical generalization, measurement and prediction in the social sciences, we do have to closely examine the value-presuppositions of each social science paradigm which we use on our own or as a result of inspiration from abroad. It is these value-presuppositions underlying the hypotheses and definition of the problems of social research which delimit the relevance of social science researches. Secondly, we have to define and formulate our social research priorities entirely on the basis of our own problems of nation-building and social change. The ICSSR has initiated some work in this field through its programme of trend reports in various social science disciplines. A critical debate on these issues may be highly desirable.

The uncritical acceptance of most social science values inherent in concepts, tools and techniques developed for the study of the Western society by us intrjects a kind of methodological individualism and social system ideology in our theories and researches which may be false and irrelevant for our society. This methodological individualism also tends to alienate the behavioural sciences, particularly sociology and social anthropology, from history; and by distorting the construction of concepts and categories it also vitiates our understanding of problems. In my opinion, greater use of history as a resource for understanding the various problems of our society may provide a sounder

path by which Indian social science can bring about realistic correspondence of its theory and methodology with the Indian reality and the issues of its identity.

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Relevance and Responsibility

Social science is a social action theorem

Seeley

THE CONTRIBUTORS to this symposium on social sciences in contemporary India are the main actors, namely, the social scientists from different disciplines and different institutions. I am using this opportunity to do some soul searching about what we have been doing, to raise questions about our role and responsibility, and to explore the routes we want to take for the destinations we may agree upon.

At the outset we need to remind ourselves that social sciences in India are very young indeed. One way of estimating their age is to consider the period since independence: A large number of the new universities and their various social science departments came into existence only after then. Another way of estimating the age of the social sciences is with the starting of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in 1969. With the starting of the ICSSR, the social sciences acquired legitimacy with government and an institutional *ma-baap* came into existence whose responsibility is to help in the growth, development, and expansion of social sciences. With the support of ICSSR it is likely that social sciences will take a leap forward because of the new facilities and the new opportunities that will now be available to us.

In the past the educational policies of the Government had emphasized the growth of science and technology. The intellectual elites, students, and teachers, and researchers, moved into physical and biological sciences and technology. The social sciences consequently developed in the past two decades in somewhat marginal and deprived conditions. Hopefully, however, with improved facilities and with a long range strategy for the growth and development of social sciences, social scientists should feel as relevant and as wanted as other scientists in the country, although even in the physical sciences there is a considerable problem of brain-drain.

SCENARIO

In the last two decades great changes have taken place in the social, economic, and political environment of the country. At the national level plans were formulated to achieve economic growth with social justice. New institutions, new activities were initiated in education, industry, community development, urban development, science and technology, agriculture and so on. Although impressive planning has been done there is a serious gap between planned targets and their achievements in every sphere of activity.

There are serious problems concerning many social issues such as tensions, violence, aggression, student unrest, health, education, unemployment, poverty, slums, population control, and corruption. These are persistent problems which require long-range studies from many different points of view. There is a tremendous need for knowledge and skills that could contribute to better implementation of plans and a better understanding of and dealing with social problems.

Do we as social scientists feel that we have a responsibility to help in dealing with our social problems? Social problems are not only out there in the social, political, and economic environment to be studied and commented upon by the social scientists, they also present challenges which have to be translated in research, teaching, and in strategies of social action. Should we consider a re-definition of our role and responsibility? Should we raise the question of relevance and reexamine the relation between research and action?

This paper is based on the thesis that as social scientists we are responsible for not only improved knowledge but also improved practice and suggests that unless social scientists do research on relevant problems of society and bring real social issues into the classroom for discussion, their research and teaching would not be challenging, inspiring, or innovative.

KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION : THE FEEDBACK LOOP

The way financial and human resources are allocated in our universities, indicate as if teaching is their major activity. There is some support for research, but as far as application and utilization of knowledge is concerned there is no evidence that it is considered as a desired activity. Consequently, in our universities, knowledge and action have had hardly any contact with each other. In the social sciences, this lack of interaction between knowledge and action has been specially damaging to the growth of social sciences and to the reputation of the social scientists. As Sanford (1970:8) has pointed out:

The categorical separation of research from practice has had some serious negative consequences for social sciences. For one thing, it has cut the academic researcher off from lines of investigation that are necessary to the development of his science, for example, the study of phenomena that cannot be experimented upon in the laboratory or the study of social structures that can be understood only through attempts to change them. Again, it has laid the social sciences wide open to the charge of irrelevance, not only by students but by men of affairs. It would hardly occur to a college

president to look to the social science literature for help with his problems; and, as Blum and Finkhauser (1965) have shown, social scientists are among the last people State legislatures would consult about the problem of drug abuse.

In India, economists are to some extent consulted in the formulation of Plans and anthropologists regarding tribal welfare, but generally the social scientists are not considered relevant in contributing to the understanding of social problems and to social policy.

The medical schools have a tradition of integrating their research and teaching, theory and practice. Hospitals are attached to medical colleges for providing learning which deals with real live situations. The business schools also attempt to bring reality into the classroom by the use of cases and other teaching devices which are experience-based—such as sensitivity training, business games, role play, etc. The business schools like the medical schools, state their objectives as research, teaching, and consultation (utilization of knowledge). Faculty are rewarded not on the basis of research alone but in terms of the relevance of their teaching to current problems and how useful they can be to client organizations. The agricultural universities which have recently started in the country, largely outside the traditional universities, also emphasize the integration of research, teaching, and extension. The Sarkar Committee, which was appointed by the Government to look into the working of the various Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) laboratories has strongly urged the creation of inter-face mechanisms which will bring science and its users into greater contact with each other to influence further both scientific formulations and their industrial applications. There is a feedback loop between research and practice which enhances the quality of research, teaching, and practice.

If we look at the more successful institutions in the country, there is a built-in integration of research and application. The atomic energy programme has been an integrated programme of research, development, and application. No boundaries were drawn between research and application especially in the early phases. Research programmes led to developmental activities, which in turn lead to important applications like nuclear power stations, electronic industries, satellite communication, and many other applications in agriculture, medicine, resources development, etc. The feedback from practice improved scientific work and the results of the scientific work improved practical applications. Similarly, the space programme of the Indian Space Research Organisation is based on the promotion and development of space sciences, space technology, and space applications. These activities are contained within the same organizational boundaries facilitating communication and interaction between research and application. In the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the All India Coordinated Projects which have contributed significantly to the green revolution are organized around the concept of research and action being the responsibility of the Project Team.

If knowledge is split from practice, as we find in the universities, further splits and conflicts occur all along the line. The experts in theory, research design, experimentation, are split from those who plan and execute, the teachers from researchers, and researchers from students and so on. The funding of research also seems to be such

that there is a split between research and action with negative consequences for the growth of social sciences.

I would like to suggest that if the social sciences are to grow, develop, and expand in many directions, they too must define their objectives in terms of research and teaching and of *utilization of knowledge*. There is need to encourage research on social action programmes. A similar recommendation was made by the Committee on Sciences and Public Policy of the National Academy of Sciences and the Problems of Policy Committee of the Social Sciences Research Council in the U.S.A.

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Traditionally, the organization of universities has been in terms of departments. Research, teaching, and learning have been subject oriented. This type of organization has helped in the growth of specialization but also in the fragmentation of knowledge. The students are trained within a discipline and research is within the narrow confines of a specialization in a discipline. This approach produces specialists and scholars but not generalists in understanding social behaviour and social action. In the medical schools, besides knowledge in disciplines, the student is taught diagnosis and action where his knowledge of the various disciplines is integrated. Similarly, in business schools besides knowledge in specialist disciplines, the student is taught business policy where an integrated approach is taken to the undertaking and dealing with a business situation. Should not the social sciences include in their research and teaching problems which require an integrated approach? The "whole" is both different and greater than the sum of its parts—the principle of synergism.

It is my view that the need for application and utilization of knowledge, for problem solving, has been responsible for the proliferation of many institutes in the country outside the university system. To mention just a few there are the Institutes of Management, Institute of Foreign Trade, Institute of Manpower Research, Institute of Community Development, Institute of Bank Management, Institute of Cooperatives, and many others. These institutes were started by the Government with the definite objective of fulfilling some practical need. They hire not only academic people but practical people from the field. The organization of, and consequently teaching and research in, these institutes is based on broad areas of knowledge and task to be fulfilled. Members are put together in groups which are multidisciplinary and wherein there are people who have experience in concepts and in practice for problem-solving. With interaction of different disciplines and of different experiences new insights and new perspectives develop for research, teaching, as well as in applications. I believe, the vast number of these new institutes started by Government outside the university system are symptomatic of the lack of concern for application of knowledge in universities on the one hand, and the rigidity and barriers existing in university departments on the other. Significant research in social sciences with relevance has to go beyond the boundaries established by disciplines. No social science discipline by itself can be self-contained. If valid theories have to be developed the social scientists have no choice but to be interdisciplinary. As Sherif (1968:46), a pure, applied as well as action-oriented social scientist points out:

When a social scientist frees himself from the narrow grooves of his academic discipline, a new range of intellectual problems is made accessible to him, and new paths of inquiry opened. I have seen this time and again among colleagues and graduate students, and am beginning to believe that just as cross-pressures in voting free an individual from following the traditional choices of his social group, intellectual cross-pressures generated by an inter-disciplinary outlook liberate a person's thinking from the limiting assumptions of his own professional group, and stimulate fresh vision.

Interdisciplinary ventures in universities as well as in institutes have been, on the whole, difficult to organize for a variety of reasons including shortages of funds. Future efforts to deal with social problems across the boundaries of the present disciplines will require to be based on far deeper thought, clearer focus, and a stronger shared commitment by the relevant parties. Perhaps, we can learn something about the organization and management of the interdisciplinary work from the aerospace industry where integrated work which is time-bound is very important. If India is to modernize, grow and develop, it will need people who can put knowledge to work rather than people who are prisoners of a discipline or a method.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: OBJECTIVITY AND SUBJECTIVITY

The social sciences rely on a variety of research methods, from patient and pedestrian observation and description of facts, to interviews, surveys and opinion polls, laboratory experiments, and sometimes sophisticated quantitative design and mathematics. All these are relevant research methodologies to probe systematically into the nature of social reality under investigation.

However, more often than not the social scientist believes that in order to be scientific he must like his more distinguished colleagues in the physical sciences examine his material as objectively and as impersonally as possible. He seems to believe that his primary responsibility is to the subject matter. He gets worried about his own point of view entering his observations and thus influencing the interpretation of his research material. These are real concerns. But in the process of being scientific and objective he seems to end up by being as distant and as uninvolved as he can be with his data.

The fact that social scientists deal with human beings and social systems and social action, however, makes a major difference. It means, so it seems to me, a significant difference in research methodology and in the involvement with research data. I am reminded of the famous Hawthorne experiments conducted in the 1920s by the Harvard Group. The research workers, Elton Mayo, a medical student who did not finish his studies in medicine; Henderson, a famous biochemist turned sociologist; and Roethlisberger, an engineer who was looking for some subject to anchor his career, designed a very scientific experiment to study the effects of working conditions on the efficiency of workers. I will not take space in discussing the Hawthorne experiments, but the significant conclusion of these scientific experiments was that the very design of the experiment was making no sense of the results. The very "controls" introduced to make the study more scientific and objective were influencing the data. In explaining the results Roethlisberger said, "A human problem to be brought to a human solution requires human data and human tools". Too often we try to do research in human

and social problems with non-human tools. We collect data from questionnaires and tests from which all human meaning has been deleted and then are surprised to find that **we reach conclusions that have no human and social relevance.**

The need to be considered scientific and objective has led many social scientists to an approach to research where the tools of investigation have received greater importance than the selection of meaningful research topics. Research topics are selected that yield more readily to measurement, to questionnaires, and to available tests. These are important tools developed and used by the "trade", but there are many instances where we seem to "use the saw as a hammer". Sometimes, in asking computer facilities for research projects in social sciences it seems as if we are asking for a crane to lift a match stick. The familiarity with various research methodologies is important to impart to the student but more often what we impart is the paraphernalia of research, the relevance is easily ignored and forgotten. Will not such an emphasis **on methodology lead to unimaginative, servile, and rigid minds?**

Kurt Lewin was able to make social psychology relevant to the pressing problems of his age. He was one of the earlier pioneers to achieve integration of psychological research with social action and in the process created new fields of research. His studies of authoritarian and democratic leadership, of changing deep-rooted food habits, were experimental studies utilizing first-hand observations of behaviour. He did not tailor his problems to fit existing methodologies but developed ingenious experimental designs and opened areas of investigation which previously had seemed inaccessible. Kurt Lewin was profoundly concerned about authoritarian and democratic leadership having escaped from Nazi Germany to the U.S.A.

There is a belief that learning (and innovation) begins with a concern. We learn (and teach) in the most profound sense only what we are concerned about. For example, the most successful training courses for management development are those which are organized around the concerns of managers. One of the most popular courses in the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, deals with the identity problems and crisis of young adults. In some universities too relevant problems of current concern are made the foci of systematic study and analysis. If students are to be taught about social tensions, about violence and aggression, about urban problems, and community development, should not the student and the researcher be an involved member in the sense of being a participant observer of the subject he is studying? Should he not collect data by first hand observations, and not through questionnaires sent through the post office or through a research assistant? It seems to me that unless we as social scientists face real issues, our data collection will not generate meaningful data. In our zeal to **be objective and scientific, we may lose the capacity to be relevant.**

Kenneth Clark (1965:7), a Negro social scientist, has questioned with great feeling the relevance of the kind of "objective" research in attitudes and opinions being done in the U.S.A.

[But] opinion research, while concerned with some of the ingredients of power, takes no stand upon them, nor does it concern itself with the consequences of opinion in action. It may ask how many persons are willing to live next door to a Negro and how many have no opinion. It does not usually investigate what such persons actually do in a given situation nor does it explore the means of social change that would

alter or sustain the direction of their behaviour. This research dabbles in reality, but avoids the real arena of action, and reflects, among other things, both a methodological sterility and a theoretical stagnation. Such preoccupation with methodological precision and measurement, reinforced by the inanimate energy of computers, appears to limit theoretical imagination and scientific creativity, and, therefore, social relevance.

Often research on relevant social problem is not undertaken because the appropriate tools for research do not exist. Is it defensible to ignore research on relevant social problems because it is not possible to have objective and precise methods of dealing with the data? To again quote Clark (1965:7) who is deeply concerned with relevant research:

One of the functions of science is to develop methods which *are* appropriate to the study of phenomena that seem worthy of investigation. A goal must be set before the means to reach it can be tested; goals are not to be rejected because the means is elusive. To limit the scope of scientific inquiry to such methods as already exist leads only to scientific stagnation.

If we do not confront real issues in our research activities and acquire a first-hand familiarity with the data, our research and teaching is likely to be indifferent and insipid. Further, the capacity to respond effectively to social situations and to take meaningful positions on contemporary issues is likely to be a trophy.

If we look at the more successful sciences we realize that they have all had a lowly and humble origin in the first-hand observation of their data. Henderson, a biochemist and a sociologist, not trained in the university, describes the importance of first-hand observation and collection of data as follows (1968):

In the complex business of living, as in medicine, *both* theory and practice are necessary conditions of understanding, and the method of Hippocrates is the only method that has ever succeeded widely and generally. The first element of that method is hard, persistent, intelligent, responsible, unrelenting labour in the sickroom, not in the library: the complete adaptation of the doctor to his task, an adaptation that is far from being merely intellectual. The second element of that method is accurate observation of things and events, selection, guided by judgement born of familiarity and experience, of the salient and the recurrent phenomena, and their classification and methodical exploration. The third element of that method is the judicious construction of a theory—not a philosophical theory nor a grand effort of the imagination nor a quasi-religious dogma, but a modest, pedestrian affair or perhaps, I had better say, a useful walking stick to help on the way—and the use thereof. All this may be summed up in a word: The physician must have, first, intimate, habitual, intuitive familiarity with things; second, systematic knowledge of things; and third, an effective way of thinking about things.

The social scientists too need first an intimate, habitual, intuitive familiarity with things before concepts and theory building can in fact result.

The best teachers, in medicine, management, engineering, law, are those who bring in a wealth of experience from their partical and consulting work into the classrooms. If the social scientists are to do consulting work, they must first equip themselves by doing research work on real and relevant problems. With experience in practical problems, the classroom will inevitably become a more challenging place to learn in. And with research experience in relevant problems, the Government and other institutions will demand help from the social scientists.

In the teaching of social sciences in universities, there is not much evidence of providing to the student a foundation of making accurate and detailed observations of first-hand material, except in anthropology. A continuous interaction between the researcher and his human data is necessary for the formulations and re-formulation of questions to be asked before relevant and meaningful data are collected.

How many psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists have studied the problem of *gherao's*, *bundhs*, *dharnas*, and other forms of public protest? How many research studies are there on youth leaders, and on problems of identity in a changing world? Although there are many reports by commissions and committees on the working of the universities, how many systematic studies have been done on the university system by social scientists ?

There is need for systematic studies whether they be in the laboratory or in the field. There is need to choose research methodology which is more relevant and more congruent to the area of study. The limited concept of scientific objectivity has resulted in our accumulation of research, which may be scientific and objective, but which does not add up to knowledge or to a greater understanding of social problems.

THE CREDIBILITY GAP

The practitioners do not understand the theories and concepts of the social scientists, and the social scientists do not understand the practitioners and their point of view. With no channels of communication between them the flow of ideas and knowledge in both directions is difficult.

Since the administrators deal with many relevant social problems and have the power of decision-making it would be useful if the social scientists and the administrators learn to communicate with each other. Communication is not merely a matter of publishing papers and monographs. It means accepting responsibility for establishing the parameters of confidence and credibility. As a first step it would be useful to start a dialogue between the social scientists and the administrators, through conferences and seminars where new ideas and concepts are presented for discussion and feedback.

Peter Drucker in his book *The Age of Discontinuity* (1969) mentions that there is so little truth, historically, in the adage "the pen is mightier than the sword" that it can only be called the "opium of the intellectuals". He mentions that we may find it hard to accept that the basic decisions in education, its direction and priorities are political decisions rather than knowledge decisions and are therefore not in the hands of the academics. If the social scientists want a say in these vital decisions they will have to establish their relevance, credibility, and prove their worth. The only choice really open to the social scientists is to take responsibility for initiating the scientist-practitioner dialogues (and here the ICSSR can play an important role). If we do not.

educational decisions of questionable quality will be imposed on us by administrators and politicians. As the social scientists gain competence and confidence men of action in government, business, and education will turn to them for advice and guidance in the more effective handling of many social problems. As social scientists with a conscience, or with a sense of pragmatism, or with a sense of responsibility to help the society, we must be concerned with influencing power, wooing friends, and winning funds.

RELEVANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

I have tried to convey that if social scientists are to be relevant then they must also assume responsibility for contributing to social action. You must have heard the story of the grasshopper and the wise owl. As the story goes the grasshopper who was suffering from the "blues" went to the wise owl for advice and help. The wise owl after listening to him attentively suggested a simple solution—become a cricket and you will be chirpy. The grasshopper went away happily but when he tried to convert this knowledge into action he had serious problems. So he returned to the wise owl and asked how he could apply this knowledge, to which the wise owl replied loftily, "I only deal with principles, it is up to you to put it into practice".

Is the role that social scientists assume similar to that of the wise owl? Traditional academics believed in the "celibacy of the intellect divorced from action". In our context can we ignore social action and delay dealing with crucial social problems? Can we let social tensions and social unrest reach a point of no return? Can we afford to live isolated from the complexities of reality and choose a role of reflection, advice or criticism standing apart from the mainstream of events?

Harvard University, like other major universities in the U.S.A. has been doing some soul searching. In a discussion memorandum on the Nature and Purpose of the University, it is stated:

A second issue facing Harvard's governance is the perpetual problem of the relative emphasis that should be given to the University functions of education, research, preservation, of culture and direct service to the wider community.... Harvard has tended to be relatively cautious and limited in its commitment to direct service in terms of field projects, action research, etc. and this is being questioned. The University's critics have dwelt at length on this problem.... For example, such issues as war and peace, poverty, race relations, pollution, population and illness are large-scale and long term problems that however defined are central to the persistence and advancement of our civilised life, not to be confused with short term issues, such as guidance systems and postal reforms. (Harvard University Committee on Governance: 1971.)

The Harvard memorandum recommends that "Harvard needs in our view, to consider seriously whether or not to engage more directly in teaching and research concerned with a few such large-scale problems". They suggested that attention on a carefully selected set of long-term problems could act as a "unifying force that would pull teaching, research and service, as well as students and faculty, into closer linkage".

I have quoted Harvard's examination of its basic goals and values, and the routes and destinations they wish to take, because I believe in the Indian context these linkages with the larger social problems are even more desirable and urgent. A redefinition or a re-emphasis of a university's functions, with much greater attention to utilization of knowledge in the service of the community would revitalize the university, giving to the academics a greater sense of adequacy, power, potency, and self-esteem.

There is sufficient evidence that the traditional ways of organizing teaching and learning in Universities are being forced out of their accustomed moulds to meet the demands being placed on them to contribute to the understanding and solution of major problems.

The acceptance of responsibility for a selected number of relevant long-term problems would also mean a change in the structure of the universities. It would mean, at any rate, several interdisciplinary centres, besides basic departments, in a university. The Jawaharlal Nehru University, unlike the more traditional universities, is organized around the concept of systems, which makes it possible for research and teaching to be related to social issues, and would make it feasible for knowledge generated to be utilized for policy-making and the improvement of practices within the framework of interdisciplinary teams.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have tried to convey that there is a missing link in the development of social sciences, namely the concern for utilization of knowledge. Traditionally, universities and consequently social scientists in universities, have perceived their function as teaching and research, but have not seriously considered utilization of knowledge as one of their functions. It is suggested that universities and social scientists explicitly recognize and accept utilization of knowledge and social action as one of their responsibilities. With an interplay of knowledge and action, both the quality of research and practice would improve.

The vast number of institutes that have been started in the country reflect the need for an integrated approach to research and practice on the one hand, and the need for interdisciplinary work to deal meaningfully with concrete problems.

It is suggested that there are major questions concerning the policies and the organization structure of the universities which require a radical reappraisal.

It is suggested that funding of research should be such so as to encourage linkages between research and action programme. It is also suggested that the Government and society will invest in social sciences on a meaningful scale only when they feel a pressing need for the type of knowledge that the social sciences are likely to provide and a connection that it can be put to practical use.

It is further suggested that dialogues between the social scientists and the practitioners be arranged. The researcher who cares about the fate of the knowledge he produces, and the administrator who wants more systematic treatment of his problems will find these dialogues on shared concerns mutually useful.

As social scientists we should consider the relevance of the subject matter of our researches more seriously. Help in terms of training programmes could be provided to young social scientists to develop methodology for researching in relevant topics, rather than have existing methodology determine the choice of the research topic.

Finally, it is suggested that graduate students in social sciences be required to spend a year on "experience-based" learning out in the field where there are social problems before they are awarded their degrees. The medical schools and to a limited extent the business schools do this.

I am conscious that many of the above suggestions may appear as the owlish type of advice but who am I to disregard a long standing academic tradition!

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Social Sciences in India : An Overview

Indian Social Science in the Changing Environs

IT IS relatively recent that the social sciences gained entry into the Indian university system. Even now, there are universities where one or the other social science is not taught—and among these are some of the old and established universities. There is still persistence of the philosophy of “knowledge for the sake of knowledge”—a tradition handed down from the age of the *rishi*, and fostered by the Western system of education moulded after the British pattern that emphasised normative, abstract, and obtruse learning. The objective of producing “Babus” did not require inculcation of the spirit of enquiry; students learnt the Humanities and the Arts to attain a certain kind of sophistication and acquire an academic aplomb. All learning, be it “Arts” or “Science”, or “Commerce”, was informed by such a philosophy, nurtured by the colonialists.

The tradition of science, laying stress on enquiry, questioning, and research entered the scene belatedly. While it has been internalized by the students of the natural phenomena, its *raison d'être* is still questioned by those who wish to address themselves to the social phenomena. Debate still continues whether there can be a social science.

The resistance is, however, breaking down. Scholars who have been abroad have seen social sciences flourishing, and some of them have returned convinced of their utility and desirability; in fact, some received formal training in the social science disciplines and came home as zealous converts. In the process some Indologists and historians became anthropologists and sociologists, and some philosophers turned psychologists. Their conversion was an important step towards the recognition of these disciplines and towards the creation of independent departments.

In the initial phases, most of these disciplines tended to be normative and philosophical. Later, empiricism gained ground. However, philosophical and normative character is still retained in a large number of departments particularly of political science; though a significant minority has launched a tirade against “ancestor worship”—they no longer devote their career to Greek political thought or to the study of constitutions of various governments. Empiricism and behaviouralism have gained entry in their research protocol.

Important departures from the traditional pattern are visible in other disciplines too. In economics, for example, the top elite speak the language of numbers and construct their paradigms with the help of complicated algebra. This is a skill which many economists in a number of universities, and in several hundred colleges, do not possess; they cannot practise the mathematics of models. Similarly, in anthropology one discovers a trend of increasing differentiation between physical and social anthropology, with the generation of general anthropologists disappearing fast. At the same time, some social anthropologists shun from a closer link with sociology; some sociologists also resent the anthropologists' intrusion into their field. In sociology itself, there is a band of scholars who practise some sort of Indology, others take an anti-empirical stance, while still others engage themselves in highly quantitative survey research.

Historically, social sciences have remained part of the wider field of humanities. But, as the Education Commission rightly said, "because of the specific aims of their research and special methods involved, the social sciences are tending to diverge more and more from the humanities". In its recommendations, the Education Commission stressed the autonomy of these groups of disciplines and pleaded that these "should be given a significant position in Indian universities and research institutions".

The reasons assigned for such a recognition to social sciences by the Education Commission are important to be quoted in full from its report:

- (1) Alongwith the natural sciences, if not to the same extent, the social sciences can be used to create a scientific outlook. Teaching and research in sociology, social psychology, economics and other social sciences, using precise methods such as statistics and other instruments of measurement can develop in students as well as in teachers, a spirit of accuracy, critical analysis, investigation and experimentation, which any good educational process has the duty to encourage and promote.
- (2) The social sciences are essential tools for the study of the conditions and needs of modern society, and without a proper use of their methods and results, control of economic, social, financial, and demographic developments or manpower requirements is impossible. Proper planning, which is important for all countries but especially so for India, needs a larger number of persons with extensive knowledge and training in the social sciences.
- (3) Modern societies need, as they become more industrialized, not only engineers, technicians and skilled workers, but also a large number of well-educated and trained people for what is usually called "the third sector of the economy": education, public administration, private management, commerce, distribution, communications, information services, etc. Specialists in these fields need good education in the social sciences.

The growing recognition of the social sciences is manifest in a number of ways. More and more universities are opening teaching departments in social sciences; affiliated colleges have also been allowed to offer social science courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels; elementary courses in some social sciences have been introduced at the secondary and higher secondary levels. On the research front,

apart from the PhD. work, several research projects have been successfully completed and many more are in progress; research institutions have been set up outside of the university system which carry out researches for different types of clientele; government departments and industrial establishments have also created special research cells. There is now a much wider field for recruitment of social scientists. They are "being engaged as administrators, research officers, advisers, consultants, programme evaluators, personnel managers, social workers and planners in government, industrial organizations and other agencies. The conviction has steadily gained ground that social science research can contribute to the growth of industry and material prosperity" (*A Report on Social Sciences in India--Retrospective and Prospective*, vol. I, 1973:1).

It is in response to the growing size of social science enterprise in India, and to the multiplicity of demands made on social sciences, that the Government of India decided to establish the Indian Council of Social Science Research in the year 1969. As the major fund giving agency for social science research, the ICSSR has the key responsibility for the development of social science talent, and for the generation of relevant social science information.

From the available statistics it is possible to have an idea of the size of the social science enterprise in India. The publication of the University Grants Commission, titled *University Development in India: Basic Facts and Figures*, lists a total of 823 post-graduate departments of social sciences in 1969-70, in the various universities and the colleges affiliated to them. The disciplines listed in this compilation include: anthropology (19); commerce (148); economics (221); geography (88); international relations (2); linguistics (15); management (4); political science (139); psychology (65); public administration (23); social work (14); and sociology (85). To these may be added a few departments of criminology, and some post-MA programmes in demography.

We must also add that in the professional institutions imparting education in agriculture, engineering, and medicine, social science faculties have been created and the students are compulsorily exposed to them. Similarly, the Institutes of Management, Administrative Staff College, Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration, National Institute of Bank Management, National Institute of Health Administration and Education, Institute of Criminology & Forensic Science, and the Bureau of Police Research and Development have on their staff a strong core of social science faculty to participate in their teaching and training programme, besides carrying out research.

With the increasing number of teaching departments, the student enrolment has also steadily grown. In the year 1969-70, social science enrolment for postgraduate work was the highest, accounting for 36 per cent; for humanities, this percentage was 34, and for natural sciences 30. Thus, more than forty-two thousand students are getting registered for social science degree every year. The PhD enrolment is also fairly high. While only 2,724 PhDs were awarded by Indian universities upto 1970 in all social sciences taken together, there were as many as 2,153 registered for PhD work in that year alone. It might interest to learn that while only 121 persons received their doctorates in social sciences during the decade 1941-50, in the year 1971 this number was as high as 320. Even in the decade 1961-70, the average per year was 199. The country now produces, on an average, 350 PhDs every year, in social sciences; those who earn their degrees from foreign universities are in addition to this number.

The Review Committee appointed by the ICSSR to assess the present status of social

sciences in India and also the role of the ICSSR, was struck not only by the rapid expansion of the social sciences but also by the imbalance between disciplines, as also between different parts of the country. For example, the Committee discovered that of the total "doctorates awarded by Indian universities during 1967-70, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Kerala, Orissa, and Tamil Nadu have to their credit only 32, 17, 15, 15, and 42 whereas Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh claim 191, 242, 466, 236 and 1,006 doctorates respectively... This imbalance is also reflected in the distribution of social scientists as between the different states.... There are only 50 social scientists in the universities of Assam, 18 in Jammu and Kashmir, 20 in Kerala, 43 in Orissa, and 40 in Tamil Nadu. This stands in unfavourable comparison with Andhra Pradesh where there are 182 social scientists in the universities, 459 in Bihar, 141 in Delhi, 146 in Gujarat, 142 in Punjab, 164 in Rajasthan and 359 in Uttar Pradesh" *A Report on the Social Sciences in India—Retrospective and Prospective*, vol. I, 1973:16).

A caution is, however, necessary in interpreting the statement made by the Committee. The imbalance between the different states is caused by factors such as the number of universities, the number of social science departments, and the tradition of social science teaching and research. It must be reiterated that the regions where there is a relatively smaller size of social science manpower have rather been late in recognizing the social sciences. Madras University, for example, does not have even today a post-graduate programme for sociology, so is the case with Gauhati University; even Kerala University started it very late. Jammu and Kashmir University does not have either sociology or psychology departments till this date.

The fact of expansion of social sciences, however, remains. Within a university, new departments have been created; more and more of the affiliated colleges have been allowed to start postgraduate courses in social sciences. New universities have rather been prompt in acknowledging the importance of social sciences; while many old universities do not have social science departments, these new universities have them.

The expansion has created several new teaching positions, and has also increased the number of students—the future generation of social scientists. Both these developments have posed a number of problems.

New teaching positions have, in a way, promoted mobility of individual scholars. Earlier, when the number of universities was limited, a teacher used to begin his career in a given university and climb the ladder of academic hierarchy on the basis of his "seniority", and organizational loyalty. Even high degree of professional commitment did not promote his career aspirations; objective conditions did not warrant this. A reader could become professor only when the present incumbent retired or expired.

Only the classroom was the venue of a scholar's performance; teaching was his key role. In the changing situation, spatial mobility has begun helping status ascendancy. Those whose professional commitment was visible through their performance outside the classroom—seminar/conference participation, research projects, and publications [books, articles] found it easier to move out and occupy senior positions in other universities. Now, research and publications have become major criteria for talent search, and scholars have increasingly shifted their attention from teaching to research. Universities today face a dual problem of retaining their best talent, and of attracting good scholars from outside. In the process, the teacher-scholar has receded into the background. Some universities have responded to the changing situation and succeeded

in flattening the top by creating more professorships and by rotating the headship; others continue with the old pattern. It must be admitted that it has not been possible to meet the sudden rise in demand for social scientists to fill senior positions in the universities. Many positions of professors are still lying vacant; in several cases readers were appointed against the posts of professors.

A different pattern is to be noticed in the colleges. In terms of preference, they get a second rank. In private-run colleges, emoluments are not very attractive, and in some states even the pay given to the teachers is very irregular. They attract, therefore, those who fail to get university jobs. Considerations of caste and kin also affect appointments in private colleges. Persons having postgraduate degrees in two subjects are sometimes given priority by the management so that they can teach two subjects. All these factors have influenced the quality of teaching in the colleges. The college administrators have apathy towards research; they do not provide adequate support structures to encourage it. The teacher's time is taken by the large number of classes, on different papers, that he has to teach.

There has come to exist a hierarchy in which colleges form the lower base, regional universities constitute the middle tier, and the elite universities occupy the top. Teaching standards show a downward devolution as one moves from the elite universities to the colleges located in remote district towns. With greater time and facilities available, universities combine the twin roles of teaching and research, while the colleges are content with teaching only.

The fact that there is today a much larger enrolment for social science degrees should not make us complacent as regards the quality. Because of the expansion, people with inferior intellectual calibre and low professional commitment have also managed to enter the teaching profession. The rigid rule-bound universities still nurture feudalistic tendencies among the academic bosses; they have rather been reticent to introduce bold innovations. Students registering in large numbers for social science degrees in the colleges do not always have proper motivation and aptitude. Since the society appreciates academic degrees, and employers consider them while deciding cases of promotion, many of the employed persons are also motivated to join evening or morning colleges. Since the popularity of a discipline is judged by the number of students registering for the course, teachers give all kinds of allurements to attract the students, and conduct the classes to suit the convenience of their "audience". The rigour of theory, and of methodology, needed in social science cannot be imparted to a student who undertakes the study on a part-time basis. Such colleges produce many MAs in social sciences but few social scientists. In this respect the universities are comparatively better-off, although there is a general feeling that there is an overall decline in quality. One consequence of this has been denial of jobs to many social science graduates in the academic market. They either remain unemployed/underemployed or get absorbed in occupations that do not require any social science qualification.

The frustration caused by non-availability of jobs has influenced the admission pattern. While in the early years of the introduction of a new social science subject in the university or colleges, there is considerable rush for admissions, the enthusiasm cools down in later years. Not only the number declines, the composition of the class gets changed with a preponderance of the female population. Teachers often remark

that the "girls are not a liability" as they do not all join the course with a view to pursuing a career; they only disseminate social science culture in the domestic world and perhaps utilize it while performing the role of child socialization. The varied motivations that bring the students to the classroom affect the pattern of their training; those few who enter the profession with such a training find themselves ill-equipped for research, and as teachers they transmit only what they have learnt. In this process, social science gets diluted, if not completely polluted. All this has telling effect on social science research.

No wonder that research-minded scholars working in the universities suffer from some sort of dissatisfaction. A heavy work load does not leave time with them to devote to research—somehow the university authorities regard research as extra-curricular. Some of the better-trained researchers coming home from abroad could not gain employment in the universities; some of the university men have also preferred to opt out. Creating a nucleus of such scholars, some academic entrepreneurs have created research centres and institutes outside the university system. Scholars working in such institutions are developing an interdisciplinary orientation. We thus have three types of academic institutions: those engaged in research only, those engaged both in teaching and research, and those engaged in teaching only. Mention must also be made of the fourth type, namely training institutions. With the introduction of machine culture in research—thanks to computers—it has become necessary for many to learn additional skills. Organizations like Datamatics Corporation cater to such need. They organize short-run courses in computer science, data processing and the like; they also undertake assignments—like punching, verification, sorting and programming.

Social science research in India received considerable support from the Planning Commission which set up a Research Programmes Committee to fund plan-relevant research proposals submitted by the university men. Research-minded scholars also did scouting and got fund from various other organizations. According to one calculation, a total of Rs 30.29 million were received by social scientists for their research in the year 1971-72. The sources of funding were:

ICSSR	Rs	3,93,600
Central Government	Rs	51,06,004
State governments	Rs	60,51,258
UGC	Rs	2,84,429
Foreign foundations	Rs	13,34,680
Local trust	Rs	1,27,500
CSIR	Rs	7,350
ICAR	Rs	6,50,000
International organizations	Rs	45,011
Self funding	Rs	1,62,94,250
Total	Rs	3,02,94,889

It can safely be said that the scope for social science activity has considerably widened. In a changed context, a newer kind of demand structure for social sciences has been

created. It has become imperative to examine whether the existing infra-structure is adequate to meet the new demands. The demands are three-fold : Dissemination of social science knowledge; generation of new knowledge; and application of social science for problem-solving. Two questions that arise in this regard are:

- (i) Are people available to impart training to an ever-increasing number of students, and to audiences that are no longer homogeneous as regards their attitudes towards social sciences?
- (ii) Do the social sciences have all the relevant information, dependable solutions, and appropriate methodology for the newer set of demands made upon them from a multiplicity of clients ?

In a way, the three problems of dissemination, generation, and application can be encapsulated as problems related to *utilization* of social science. It is of interest to know (i) how the findings of researches have been utilized? and (ii) in what way social science research to be carried out can be made utilizable ? The existing stock of social science research is utilized for purposes of (i) training the future generation of social scientists, (ii) educating and informing the common man—the potential user as well as the citizen-at large, and (iii) problem-solving. All these aid the process of dissemination of social science culture; done imaginatively, a goodwill for social science can be earned.

The three essential components of training of a social scientist are: theory, methodology, and illustrative content from existing social realities. It is rather sad that the social science teaching in the universities and colleges is, by and large, still carried on traditional lines. The disciplinary boundaries are jealously guarded and the syllabi offered to the students are characterized by an annoying degree of constancy rather than by needed innovativeness. It is not usual to find incorporation of new research findings in the teaching protocol. Students are fed on old theoretical formulations and on data related to societies of the Western hemisphere. Very little of India is introduced, and fewer if any, Indian references are cited. It is this feature which has been described as “academic colonialism”, roots of which are much deeper.

Despite this general attribute, some differences obtain between universities. After independence, an important diversity has been created by differences in the medium of instruction; depending upon the language in which they received their instruction, social scientists now being trained in the Indian universities will have a geographically restricted region for their activities.

Across universities, one also finds differences in regard to the stage at which any given social science is introduced. For admission into a postgraduate programme in any social science, the minimum qualifications laid down by the universities are also not comparable; thus, persons with differing intellectual equipment enter the post-graduate education in any given social science discipline.

Diversity is also to be noticed in regard to emphasis on exposure to other social sciences and the nature of inter-relationship between them. Teaching of research methodology is also not given equal emphasis in all social sciences, nor is the content similar either in the same discipline in different universities, or in different disciplines. Differences also exist in other aspects: mode of instruction, size of class, technique of assessment, and objectives of training.

It is gratifying to acknowledge the fact that social sciences have gained entry into the professional institutions that train doctors, engineers, and agricultural scientists. Social scientists are recruited by these institutions to impart instruction. This is indeed a new role; here the teacher is required to contribute to the training of a person who is not going to be a social scientist. The role is not only new but challenging. Social scientists opting for it confront a difficult situation: the traditional university departments treat this an inferior assignment; the core departments in the professional institutions regard social sciences as secondary; and the students requiring to do this course work exhibit little sympathy for the extra-burden and additional demand on their time. For the social scientists in these institutions, the university social scientists are the positive reference groups; for the professional students, their professional teachers are the reference group. Operating in a somewhat hostile climate and suffering from the crisis of role definition, the social scientist in such a setting has a difficult task to perform. His unidisciplinary bias is put to a test. He is required to establish a rapport between his own discipline and the discipline in which his students will specialize. This can not be done by a wholesale borrowing of the traditional syllabus from the university. Moreover, he is also required to demonstrate the utility of interdisciplinary approach: if social sciences themselves do not carry out interdisciplinary dialogue, what justification is there for sociology or psychology to have dialogue with electrical engineering or plant pathology? Partial success in this regard has been achieved in medical education; there, the teaching of social sciences is done by people who have their medical degrees—this increases their acceptability and also communicability. To an extent, the agricultural extension men have also sorted out the problem. But in engineering institutions, a social scientist is still an outside bird. While the latter are not disowned by the social science, the former feel somewhat misplaced in both the settings. Social sciences have to establish a case for their continued inclusion in these curricula and have to demonstrate their utility so that their academic visa does not get invalidated. For this, a four-pronged attack will be needed: (i) Carving out a suitable syllabus to form part of the vocational kit of the professional trainee; (ii) educating and convincing the technical faculty of the role of social sciences in professional education; (iii) training a cadre of social scientists to take on teaching assignments in such institutions; and (iv) initiating researches the findings of which will have immediate pedagogic and vocational relevance—for example, researches in the field of sociology of medicine, sociology of science, industrial psychology, and the like. A well-conceived plan is necessary to meet this new demand and establish the credentials of social sciences.

Participation in the teaching programme for the technologists and other applied scientists is a kind of investment which would pay its dividends for the social science. In addition to the so-called “liberalization” of their education, the technologists, and others of their ilk, will also begin to have sympathetic appreciation of what social science can do for them in the sphere of their professional competence. It is, in a way, training of the potential user of social science research: he would know what is to be asked, he would know the manner of structuring the question, and he would have the facility for a meaningful communication.

Social scientists in India have generally kept away from the mass media. Those who have made use of them have largely done so in other roles—explicit or disguised. Surely,

there has been political use of the social science by those who speak the language of commitment—a word with the least degree of consensus as regards its meaning. But what has been neglected here is popularization of social science—a programme for the education of the common man in the idiom of social science. Quite often people seek solutions of the problems from the social scientists as if they are readily available in their kit-bag. This is largely because of their ignorance about the performance capability of social sciences. Both for gaining popular support for social science research, and for sharing the fruits of enquiry, social scientists have the responsibility to reach the common man, and this task remains largely unattended.

Because of a certain lack of rapport between the social scientist and the lay citizen, social science is perceived as something non-useful. The down-to-earth administrator feels that day-to-day problems cannot be solved through social science; the social scientist has the complaint that his researches are not utilized in policy-making, its implementation, or problem-solving. He is worried that while his research reports decorate the almirahs of the office of the administrator, they do not illumine the corridors of his mind. In the narrower sense of the term, this is non-utilization. Various factors are said to be responsible for this. Social science research is criticised for its irrelevance: it is alleged that social scientists think of theory and write jargon; that research topics are chosen without regard to their societal significance; that immediately employable ideas and insights from the growing repertory of research cannot be easily retrieved. There is some merit in these charges and the occasion demands that future researches take note of them. It must, however, be said that “relevance” is as turbid a concept as “commitment”. What is relevant for one kind of client—user—may be irrelevant for another. It cannot be legislated that all social science research has to be client-oriented and problem-solving type. Researches contribute to the growing body of theory and it is the efficacy of the theoretical apparatus that determines its explanatory power. It may not be the case that answers or solutions to all the problems can be provided instantly; but certainly social science skills are utilizable for arriving at answers. On the part of social science it is necessary to prepare an inventory of areas where its utilization is possible; to survey the literature and collate the utilizable information, ideas, and theories; to conduct researches focusing on the problems in need of solution. Clearly, there is a need for sustained dialogue in congenial atmosphere between the producers of research and its consumers. Questions related to involvement and commitment of the researcher assume importance in this context and social scientists in India, as elsewhere, are divided on these issues.

Social sciences in India face the challenge of coping with the enlarging demand structure. For some of the demands they have the necessary supply; for others they have the knowhow and the needed technology to deliver the goods, for the rest they are still to find a way and are groping for it.

Indian Sociology : Historical Development and Present Problems*

CONCEPTUALLY a distinct scientific discipline sociology in India, as in most countries of the world, is a 20th century phenomenon. Also, as in all societies, sociology in India has tried to answer questions relevant to the discipline, though in the particular context of the Indian society. In this manner it is contributing to universal sociological knowledge from the bottom upwards, as it were, instead of presuming a universal view from the findings and generalizations appropriate to one particular society or to a set of similar societies (e.g., the "American" society or the "Western" societies). However, Indian sociology—and for that matter sociology anywhere—has currently reached a critical point in its development which, I believe, is the source of its present problems.

The critical point is in between any two stages of development which a scientific discipline may have to pass through in the course of answering four fundamental questions in regard to the phenomena it deals with: *what is it, how is it, why is it, and what will it be?* The first two questions refer to the descriptive stage since the answer to "what is it?" is an enumeration of the properties of the phenomena under reference, and the answer to "how is it?" is a classification and analysis of the phenomena in terms of their inner articulation, variation, and interrelation. Subsequently, the third question refers to the *explanatory* stage since the answer to "why is it?" will denote the causality of the phenomena; and, lastly, the fourth question refers to the *diagnostic* stage since, following from the answer to the first three questions, the answer to "what will be?" will, on the basis of probability, denote the structure, function and process of the contemporary phenomena in a dynamic perspective.

As it was for virtually all countries in the world up to the middle of the present century, it was adequate for India too until its independence in 1947 to learn about *what* the societal phenomena are, *how* they occur, and *why* they occur. The central aim was to have an objective understanding of the society *as it had developed*, and *as it was* at the most proximal point in time, in terms of the description of the societal phenomena and their explanation on the basis of the empirical findings and in the light of the

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theory which gave the best possible fit to the description. The situation, however, changed in the later half of the present century. Pursuant to the stage reached by sociology and the *social* demand on the discipline, it is no more sufficient merely to describe and explain the societal phenomena: it is necessary now to diagnose "what will it be?" about the societal phenomena and thus about the society itself.

This is evident from the crucial issues we face in the world at large. We are not to rest content with the knowledge of *what*, *how*, and *why* of the Black movement in the USA, of the student's upsurge in France, Germany and Japan, of the youth revolt and the "non-conformism" of the Hippies throughout the world, and of many such phenomena. Our task is to diagnose, objectively and by means of the best possible consolidation of our current knowledge, "what will it be?" in respect of each one of them. This question is also in-built to the issues, like, the motivation of the people in the "developing" societies to "change", the "social" need for family planning and the presumed inaction of the people in many parts of the world including the United States (cf. Lee, 1960), and so on. Similarly, the question is obvious with reference to the tension between north and south Korea, east and west Germany, north and south Vietnam, Israel and the UAR, India and Pakistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh, etc. This is why sociology everywhere today is oriented towards social dynamics and is geared to the problems of social change, social development, nation-building, and so on. In respect of these and similar problems, Indian sociology also will have to find out "what will it be?" in line with its consistent effort to answer the "Indian question".

The answer to the question "what will it be?" is *implied* in many descriptive and explanatory studies (e.g. Benedict, 1947; Banfield, 1958). But, in order that the answer is not esoteric, subjective, or partial, the orientation and methodology of scientific discipline at the diagnostic stage has to be different from those at the descriptive and explanatory stages. This point I am unable to discuss in this brief communication (Mukherjee, R., 1972); anyhow it refers to sociology at large and not to Indian sociology alone. Therefore, I shall only indicate the need for Indian sociology to move over to the diagnostic stage from the currently reached critical point in its development. In the following pages, accordingly, I shall treat the historical development of Indian sociology under three stages specified below; and, after briefly discussing the first two, dwell at some length on the third in order to elucidate the present problems in Indian sociology.

As the three stages are interlinked, all of them may be found in one time-period but in a different order of importance. Respectively, therefore, they may characterize the time-sequence according to the main focus of research in each period. We may thus distinguish three stages in the historical development of Indian sociology as follows :

1. Proto-professional stage of sociology prior to the twentieth century.
2. Professional stage of descriptive and explanatory sociology in the first half of the present century.
3. Currently needed stage of diagnostic sociology.

The first stage is characterized as "proto-professional" because it marks the period of data collection, description, and explanation which are of sociological import but not

yet used for the consolidation of a distinct branch of knowledge. In this period, sociology was submerged in the governmental reports and surveys on the life of the people and in the papers and monographs on the same subject but under the level of antiquity or indology, and later of economic or "social" studies. Two distinct demands dominated this stage : (1) the requirement of the State Polity to learn about the people for an efficient government, and (2) the desire of the Social Polity to know about itself.

Both were prevalent from remote periods in India's history. Kautilya (c. 300-400 B.C.) advised the king to collect data about the country and the people, and his treatise *Arthashastra* contains a substantial amount of aforesaid information (Shamasastri, 1951). Amongst some others, a well-known treatise of this kind, written during the reign of Akbar (1556-1605) is Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* (Blochmann and Jarrett 1939-48). Also, the literature of the period, especially during the 13th-16th century, testifies to the corresponding role of the social polity (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1958 : 174-212).

The British realized the same need as felt by the previous rulers. Therefore, with the consolidation of their power, firstly in Bengal, Governor Henry Verelest asked the revenue supervisors in 1769 to collect information on the leading Indian families and their customs. The procedure was later extended by the East India Company (and afterwards by the British Imperial Government) to all classes of people in India, and thus resulted in the collection of a wealth of sociological data as contained in the British Parliamentary papers and reports, etc. (*Select Committee Report*, 1812). Warren Hastings, during his Governorship of Bengal (1772-74) and Governor-Generalship of India (1774-86), arranged for the preparation of a compendium of Hindu Law (Halhead, 1776) which was a product of significant sociological value for what it does and *does not* contain, as was another effort of Hastings to prepare a compendium of the Mohamedan Law (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1958: 314-26). Similar sporadic but consistent attempts towards collection and collation of data on the life of the Indian people were made by the British during the consolidation of their power in India in the second half of the 18th century.

Specific attempts were made in this respect from the beginning of the 19th century. Francis Buchanan (later Buchanan-Hamilton) was commissioned to survey extensive areas in south and eastern India; Walter Hamilton's *Gazetteer* came out in 1820, and Edward Thornton's *Gazetteer* in 1854 (Buchanan-Hamilton, 1807; Hamilton, 1820; Thornton, 1854). Subsequently, the preparation of the Imperial as well as the District *Gazetteers* became a routine task of the administration, as also the socio-economic account of the people in the reports of the Population Census from 1880 which contained valuable sociological data. Other agencies also were formed for the collection and collation of data of sociological significance; such as, the all-India ethnographical surveys of castes and tribes from the last decades of the 19th century (Nesfield 1885; Risley 1891; Crooke 1896; and so on). Along with the governmental agencies, the Christian missionaries and many European intellectuals and administrators collected and collated data on their own initiative, which are of substantial sociological value (Dubois, 1816 ; Maine, 1861, 1871; Baden-Powell, 1872, 1899; Fick, 1897; Stevenson-Moore, 1898).

Also, in this period, the Indian social polity found a new interest to learn about itself. "Confronted by the disquieting spectacle of what seemed superior social organization as well as superior material culture, Indian thinkers began to look at their own family,

law, education, and religion in ways different from those sanctioned by century-old traditions" (Becker and Barnes, 1952: II, 1135-36). This outlook, brought to the forefront of the Indian society by persons, like, Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1836), Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83), Mahadev Govinda Ranade (1842-1901), Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), led to the collection and collation of new empirical data as well as documentary evidence and to reinterpretation of India's religions and ethic, customs and institutions, etc., which are of no less sociological relevance.

Rammohun Roy, for example, is reported to have had collected data on the widows who were burnt on their husband's pyre, while he reinterpreted Hinduism in the light of universalism in religion and wrote on the utility of English education as a gateway to the Western knowledge in science (cf. Nag and Burman, 1945). Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91) not only adduced evidence from scriptures in favour of widow marriage and against polygamy but also collected empirical data on child-widows and supplied statistics to support his statement that, contrary to the claim, polygamy was prevalent in the 1860s among the Bengali *Kulin* Brahmins (Vidyasagar, 1972: II, 201-8). Also, in the light of their accounting of the prevailing social organization and their interpretations of the social system, the Indian social polity began to furnish data on the caste system, family, rural-urban interactions, social stratification, changes in the material culture, values and ideas of the people, and so on (Native, 1880; Bhattacharya, 1896; Ranade, 1902). Many of these studies, however, are in Indian languages—in Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, etc. (Bose, R., 1874).

The incipient development of sociology in India was thus linked up with the Indian renaissance, of which the most prominent figure is considered to be Raja Rammohun Roy. The trend was not lost in later years. On the contrary, the role of the national movement for independence was considerable for the growth of Indian sociology in the 19th and the 20th century, as stated or implied by the founders of professional sociology in India, like, Brojendra Nath Seal, Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Radhakamal Mukerjee. Also there are evidences to indicate that one of the by-products of the mass movement of the 1920s, led by Gandhi, was to stimulate the interest of the social scientists in "village studies" (cf. Patel, 1952: 1; Mukherjee, R., 1965: 169-73). And, since India's independence in 1947, national issues have markedly influenced sociological research on India, as is obvious from the published literature. Indian sociology has thus been geared to the task of answering the "Indian question" in different contexts—colonial or otherwise, etc.—from the beginning to date.

Indian sociology attained a professional character when the University of Bombay started a post-graduate course in economics and sociology in 1914, the University of Calcutta began to teach sociology to the post-graduate students from 1917, and an under-graduate course in sociology was introduced in Mysore University in 1917. The students produced in these centres, especially in Bombay and Calcutta, headed new centres of sociological study and research in Lucknow, Poona, Baroda, Delhi etc.; and the latter centres (especially the Lucknow centre) accelerated the professionalisation of sociology in India. In the first half of the present century, however, teaching of sociology in India was either linked with economics or social anthropology, or it had a

strong antecedence of idealistic philosophy. This had left its effects on the development of the discipline.

The effect on descriptive sociology was two-fold: The macro-studies were essentially oriented towards the economic life of the people (Mukerjee, R. K., 1945; Mahalanobis *et. al.*, 1946; Chattopadhyay, K.P. and Mukherjee, R., 1946). The micro-studies were prompted by the anthropological approach towards intensive examination of purposively selected small areas. The result of both tendencies was: (1) the "economic" bias tended to ignore some vital "social" facts like the religion-caste-family-kinship organization of the people; and (2) the "anthropological" bias was not only partial to the non-economic variety of "social facts" but the implicit or explicit attempt to generalize for India by employing the "multiplier effect" on the small pieces of observation was usually not valid and certainly not precise and comprehensive (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1965: 176-81).

However, macro-studies of the descriptive type and of "sociological" orientation were not altogether absent in the first half of the present century (Ketkar, 1909; Ghurye, 1938; Chattopadhyay, K.P., 1952). Also, large-scale studies in descriptive sociology attained a high degree of efficiency in later time (Gore *et. al.*, 1967). Moreover, while the currently undertaken micro-studies are usually free from pro-anthropological or anti-economic and anti-historical bias, attempts are now made to collate micro-studies in order to produce useful pieces of descriptive sociology of rural life, urban development, family and caste organization, etc. (Bose, N.K., 1960; Bulsara, 1964; Kolenda, 1968; Desai, 1969). By the second half of the present century, descriptive sociology in India has thus attained maturity, and India has become one of those countries which possesses masses of sociological data and description.

Similar to descriptive sociology, in the first half of the present century explanatory sociology developed in India with different orientations. A purely ideological orientation was evident, of which the main trend was to rationalize the so-called Hindu view of life through "sociological" interpretation of the ancient Indian texts and treatises, like, the *Bhagvat Gita* and the *Manusmriti*. Not many professional sociologists subscribed to this trend, and its exponents are rarely found today (Motwani, 1958). The Western idealistic orientation in sociology is hardly discernible as a trend in India; compared to the former its exponents—both in the past and at present—are even rarer. In recent years, only a few have posed the issues emerging from this orientation vis-a-vis empiricism in social research (Chattopadhyay, D.P., 1967). On the other hand, there has been an equally feeble trend to move over from empiricism to idealism having a distinct universal quality of its own. Radhakamal Mukerjee, one of the pioneers of descriptive sociology in India, whose contribution to explanatory sociology with an "economic" slant is also of permanent value, and who in later years advocated the "trans-disciplinary" (not the inter-disciplinary) approach to sociology, is perhaps the best exponent of this trend (cf. Mukerjee, R.K., 1964a).

These trends could play contradictory roles in Indian sociology if they were strong enough to assert themselves. But they remained subservient to the predominant trend in Indian sociology throughout its development which is empirical against an inter-disciplinary background of indology, history, social anthropology, economics, psychology and politics; they could, therefore, complement this trend as correctives against gross empiricism and be controlled, at the same time, against idealistic chauvinism or sterile

pedantism. The predominant trend was set by Brojendra Nath Seal (1864-1938)—a philosopher and erudite scholar in the sciences and humanities (cf. Seal, 1958). He initiated studies in “Comparative sociology”, was instrumental in introducing the teaching of sociology in Calcutta University (as Professor of Mental and Moral Science) and in Mysore University (as Vice-Chancellor), and thus played a very important role in professionalizing the discipline in the subcontinent. The trend was followed and expanded by his students and likeminded colleagues who, like Seal, were influenced by the European and American schools of thought but maintained an originality of their own (Sarkar, 1922, 1937; Mukerji, 1932, 1946; Mukherjee, R.K., 1939; Ghurye, 1932, 1943; Chattopadhyay, K.P., 1935). They, thus, established a landmark in the development of Indian sociology and some of their students carried on the tradition (Bose, N.K., 1949; Karve, 1953; Kapadia, 1947; Desai, 1959).

The trend faced a challenge in the 1950s and early 1960s from two directions, viz., (1) the imposition of a rather a-historical, non-economic, “micro” approach fashionable at that time, in some sectors of the British and American social anthropology; and (2) the imitative and a-contextual importation of some “static” theories of social systems and “dynamic” theories of communication, diffusion, innovation and change, which were then prevalent in certain sectors of American sociology. While the former could not curb the originality and usefulness of some researchers (Srinivas, 1952, 1962), both had a serious effect on the steady development of Indian sociology. There was a spate of superficial (and often irrelevant) theorizing and inconsequential (and often fallacious) “applied research”. Sociology, to be sure, appeared to attain the “scientific” status with its own jargons and phrases, and occasionally looked very impressive with heavy doses of quantification (necessary or not). But, whether or not the fashion-setters could still contribute significantly to the growth of sociological knowledge, the younger sociologists thus could escape the rigour of science and yet impress the “academic” public with theoretical cliches and “quantified” research findings without much effort to comprehend the substantive reality and undergo the methodological (and not mere technical) exercise to explore it.

Those who pursued the discipline in the manner described earlier did not neglect the intrinsic merit of sociological contributions from other societal references, but fought against their doctrinaire imposition on Indian sociology (Singh, B., 1961). In the beginning, they were considered “biased” or were ridiculed as backdated. Even D.P. Mukerji, one of the pioneers of Indian sociology, was accused of raking up an obscurantist outlook (and duly ignored) when he entitled his *Presidential Address to the First All-India Sociological Conference* in 1955 as “Indian Tradition and Social Change” and said:

Neglect of the social base often leads to arid abstractions, as in recent economics. On the other hand, much of empirical research in anthropology and in psychology has been rendered futile because its fields have so far been kept covered. Yet, within this mansion of sociology the different social disciplines live... In any case, participation by long conditioning, which is the first requisite of understanding, should make it less possible to pass on the most jejune and vapid generalizations about Indian problems with which we are being familiarized today in the name of scientific research....

Thus it is that it is not enough for the Indian sociologist to be a sociologist. He must be an Indian first, that is, he is to share in the folkways, mores, customs and traditions, for the purpose of understanding his social system and what lies beneath it and beyond it.... It pains me to observe how our Indian scholars succumb to the lure of modern 'scientific' techniques imported from outside as a part of technical aid and 'know how', without resistance and dignity. In the intellectual transactions which are taking place, it seems that we have no terms to offer, no ground to stand upon.... Our progressive groups have failed in the field of intellect, and hence also in economic and political action, chiefly on account of their ignorance of and unrootedness in India's social reality (Mukerji, 1961: 20-31).

The aberrations, however, began to be remedied from the latter part of the 1960s mainly under the wholesome impact of social reality and also because Indian sociology never totally forsook the responsibility to answer the "Indian question". The proponents of the aforesaid British and American schools of social anthropology no longer fought against the historical or economic "bias", and increasingly the knowledge gained from the American and European schools was brought into the Indian perspective in an objective and wholesome manner. Explanatory sociology in India thus resumed a proper course of development, in which the role of non-Indian sociologists also has been appreciable. A listing of all—Indian and non-Indian sociologists—in this context would be too long; any selection would be invidious. Just to avoid a total neglect, however, a few non-Indian sociologists may be mentioned without casting any reflection on others (Bailey, 1958; Dumont, 1970; Fukutake, 1967; Singer, 1972). The names of Indian sociologists in this respect are well-known to all of us.

By this time, however, Indian sociology had reached a point at which, like descriptive sociology, explanatory sociology was relevant and necessary but not sufficient. In the colonial period, the appropriate task of Indian sociology was to describe and to explain the Indian society for two main reasons. It was necessary to present an objective picture against superficial generalizations which, on the one side, eulogized India's past well above that of the West and, on the other, denigrated its present (Mayo, 1927). The latter not only absolved the colonial power of its role in perpetuating India's current backwardness but also enabled it prognosticate that in India "any quickening of general political judgement is bound to come very slowly indeed" (*Indian Statutory Commission*, 1930: I. 15). Equally necessary it was to explore the society unequivocally and comprehensively in view of the wide variations found in the subcontinent of India. For, this prompted one spontaneously to arrive at a fallacious conclusion, as the seven blind men in the Indian fable came to, by characterizing an elephant according to the parts of its body—the trunk, foot, ear, etc—they touched, respectively: a point I have repeatedly illustrated elsewhere (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1965). Obviously, in independent India also two responsibilities of Indian sociology—description and explanation—are relevant and necessary and, therefore, evermore efficient descriptive and explanatory sociology must be on the agenda. But, today, the course of consolidation of knowledge cannot stop at description and explanation; instead, they are to lead to the answer of the question "what will it be?" about the contemporary Indian society. This means that Indian sociology must now attain the diagnostic stage which will also further enrich the preceding descriptive and explanatory stages by more comprehensive collection of data

and more precise unequivocal interpretation of the data on an *a priori* basis as well as in the light of the available and applicable theories.

The present problems in Indian sociology are thus germane to this demand on its further development. I shall, therefore, conclude this paper, firstly, with a brief discussion on the prevailing concepts and formulations in Indian sociology for purposes of explanation and diagnosis: such as, achievement-orientation and rationality in respect of "modernization"; urbanization and social transformation in respect of planning; "Protestant ethic" and industrial development in respect of value consideration; nuclearisation of the joint families or "sanskritization and the dominant caste" in respect of social change; and so on. Afterwards, I shall discuss the role of sociology vis-a-vis other social science disciplines in order to unfold the social reality in contemporary India.

In any scientific discipline an explanation may be: (1) relevant or irrelevant, if it is fallacious; (2) necessary or unnecessary, if it is *sui generis* to the given facts; (3) efficient or inefficient, if it is equivocal; and (4) sufficient or insufficient, if it is not comprehensive. If these four sets of characteristics were unrelated and each could occur independently in two ways as either/or, an explanation would have the possibility to occur under one of $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 16$ mutually exclusive categories. The characteristics are, however, sequentially related in such a manner that they produce five mutually exclusive possibilities for an explanation to occur; such as, if an explanation is not relevant, it cannot be necessary, efficient or sufficient. We may illustrate the five possibilities with reference to Indian sociology and thus indicate how it has reached a critical point in its development which calls for the diagnostic approach to the discipline.

1. *An explanation may not be relevant, and, therefore, not necessary, efficient and sufficient.* According to the Brahmanical "tradition", which has permeated into virtually all sectors of the Indian society, all social actions fall under one of the four categories of *dharma* (related to religious practices), *artha* (related to wealth and material well-being), *kama* (related to the fulfilment of desire), and *moksa* (related to ultimate salvation). The evaluation of any social action, however, refers to whether it is a *dharma* action (e.g. righteous) or an *adharma* (e.g. not-*dharma*) action. The category of *Moksa*, in this context, consumes all actions. Therefore, the "traditional" social actions categorized as "artha" and "kama" but evaluated as *dharma* can be achievement-oriented at any time period, and this possibility is reinforced by the fact that the gamuts of *dharma* and *adharma* actions are not immutable. Otherwise we fail to explain instances when a Brahmin working even at the production bench of a shoe factory (e.g. the Bata complex) does not consider himself to be committing an *adharma* action, which he would reckon to have done if he was earning his livelihood as a cobbler. Thus, the lack of achievement-orientation *per se* is not a characteristics of the so-called Indian tradition, as we are told in course of an imitative and a-contextual application of a model of "modernization".

McClelland, who perhaps has given the most logically structured formulation of achievement-orientation in reference to "economic growth" (cf. McClelland, 1961), tends to agree to the above in his later writings (McClelland, 1971: 206-1) and to imply the need for sociology to attain what I have labelled the diagnostic stage in order to

substantiate his viewpoint (McClelland 1971: 254-93). Correspondingly, if we pursue the example of "traditional" social actions in India in present times, we find that the consequence of *dharma* and *adharma* actions is assessable in the future perspective according to the doctrine of *karma* and the theory of reincarnation of souls. Accordingly, the contemporary actions are cumulative and the net effect on the presumed next birth is derived by subtracting the total consequences of *adharma* actions from that of *dharma* actions. An enterprising person, therefore, can consistently perform *adharma* actions with impunity (e.g. profiteering through the adulteration or hoarding of foodstuffs) and be absolved of the sin through perfunctory *dharma* actions (e.g. occasional charity to those who have suffered the most from the course of profiteering and blackmarketing, contribution to the propagation of religion, etc.). Rationality which has been aptly defined as "the use of the most effective means to reach a given end (Rogers 1962: 91), can thus be purposively applied in the Indian contemporary situation to *optimize the relation between ends and means* without moving out of the sphere of "traditional" ideology and action.

Possibly, it is in this or a similar manner that many apparent incongruities in the contemporary Indian society can be duly exposed; one of which I have indicated as the "anti-social" activities of many "achieving" persons. Hence, like achievement-orientation, rationality *per se* is not a suitable indicator of any course of modernization. Instead, for the clarification of the above and allied concepts in contemporary Indian sociology, what is needed is *not an explanation* of the lack of achievement-orientation, rationality, etc., but a *diagnosis*, of how rationality works in India today, whether the "traditional" achievement-orientation is conducive or not to the desired course of social development, and so on.

2. *An explanation may be relevant but not necessary and, therefore, not efficient and sufficient.* An alteration in a societal arrangement is likely to alter a behaviour pattern which is *sui generis*. It may be useful, therefore, to describe the latter with reference to the former, but to draw the explanation which follows automatically is hardly necessary. For example in the second half of the present century India is being rapidly urbanized with the establishment of new industrial and urban centres and the development and extension of the existing cities and towns. This has naturally called for the migration of villagers to the urban sites and led to certain alterations in their living and behaviour patterns which in regard to the nature of work and recreation, habitation and consumption of cultural amenities, circle of neighbours, comrades at work, and so on, are the direct consequences of their transfer from a rural (and predominantly agricultural) to an urban (and essentially industrial) sector of the society. These differences, therefore, may be relevant and necessary to *describe* the course of urbanization in India today (Rao, 1970); but for *explanatory* purposes, they are obvious from the fact of movement from rural to urban environment. Hence, any explanation of social transformation in India in terms of such characteristics of urbanization—which still continues in Indian sociology—would be unnecessary and therefore inefficient, and certainly not sufficient.

What is needed instead, —in order to appraise the concepts and formulations, like, urbanization as a "way of life", rural-urban dichotomy or continuum, —is to ascertain the *chain reaction* which may have been set up by those alterations in the living and behaviour patterns of the people which are *sui generis* to urbanization. This, however,

is a matter of diagnosis and not of explanation, as indicated in a study of "urbanization and social transformation(?)" in West Bengal (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1965: 15-58) and also substantiated by the following conclusion drawn from a study of four centres of industrialization and urbanization in the Okhla Estate (Delhi), Hyderabad-Secunderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Ludhiana (Punjab), and Rajkot (Gujarat) in the first half of the 1960s:

If a tentative conclusion is in order, it is that the notion that the traditional institutions of a society are obstacles to industrialization is perhaps too sweeping. From the limited data we have gathered, the case rather seems to be that it is perfectly possible for traditional and modern ideas to live in separate worlds, the traditional ones being applied in their sphere, the modern ones in their own. Similarly, traditional social observances continue alongside modern practices wherever the two are not flatly opposed. Instances of any conflict between the old and the new do not emerge from our material. Our studies however mainly refer to situations which are found in the first phase of the industrialization process. It is to be seen whether this happy coexistence will remain undisturbed when these industries develop into more complex forms (UNESCO Research Centre, 1966: 31).

3. *An explanation may be relevant and necessary but not efficient and therefore, not sufficient.* The ethos of the Parsis in contemporary India has been explained in terms of Weber's and Merton's formulation of ideas and actions in order to "relate certain values with certain behaviour patterns" (Kennedy Jr., 1965: 18). Such an explanation to evaluate the role of entrepreneurs in India today is relevant and necessary, but it may not be efficient to appraise the concept of "industrial rationality" (Kennedy Jr., 1965: 26). For it may be pointed out from a more comprehensive examination of the available facts that:

- (i) The Parsis, Khojas, Gujaratis and Marwaris are the four of several ethnic groups which have their homeland in the western region of India.
- (ii) According to their success in the "twin interests in trade and technology" (Kennedy Jr., 1965: 26) the communities of Marwaris and Gujaratis are to be ranked at the top of the Indian society, that of the Parsis next, and that of the Khojas closely following the Parsis.
- (iii) Following Kennedy's assumption, the Parsis are governed by the values expressed in Zoroastrianism, the Khojas are governed by the values expressed in Islam of a distinct variety, the Gujaratis by those in Hinduism (mainly of the Vaishnava trend) and the Marwaris by those in Jainism.
- (iv) The constellation of values expressed in Jainism and Hinduism of the Vaishnava trend (which may not be regarded as so very apart) is certainly very different from that in Islam or Zoroastrianism.

Thus the Parsis may record success in the "twin interests in trade and technology", but so do other distinct communities of the Indian people who may also belong to the same socio-cultural milieu. And, while the "value system" of the Parsis (with which

Kennedy correlates industrial behaviour) is different from that of the analogous communities, some of the latter ones record a higher degree of proficiency in industrial behaviour. We are thus concerned here with a matrix which contains, hypothetically, two independent sets of possibilities: (1) the presence or absence of Industrial behaviour in a community of people, and (2) the presence or absence of a particular set of values in that community. Hence, unless we take this matrix into account, any explanation regarding ideas and the corresponding actions would be equivocal.

Pursuantly, for an appraisal of the concept of "industrial rationality", just any correlation between a set of ideas and a set of actions would not be efficient and, therefore, not sufficient. Equally inefficient and insufficient will be any overall explanation which regards a regressional relation of "ideas" upon "actions" as of causal, concomitant or casual importance. Instead, "industrial rationality" in contemporary India should be appraised in the light of all available theoretical explanations (Weberian, Marxist, and others) and of an intensive as well as comprehensive examination of the empirical data. This, again, is a matter of diagnosis and not of explanation.

4. *An explanation may be relevant, necessary and efficient, but not sufficient.* A collated sample of 44,657 family-units (coresident and commensal kingroups), representing 30 communities of people from virtually all parts of India, indicates that 55 per cent of the locally functioning family-units are, on the average, nuclear (Mukherjee, R., 1971a: 79). Therefore, under the prevailing assumption that the Indian family is "traditionally" joint, an explanation of break-up of the joint structures into nuclear appears to be relevant, necessary and efficient from the empirical data. Theoretical generalizations on social change in the "developing" societies due to economic development and change in the value system of the people, etc., also support (or prompt) this explanation (cf. Epstein, 1962: 322; Linton, 1952: 48; Morrison, 1959: 67). But, even, if we assume that all Indians wish to live in joint families (which may not be true) and agree with Nimkoff that presently they prefer to form unilateral structure with sons and their progeny instead of the collateral structures which include their brothers, brothers' sons and their progeny (Nimkoff, 1959: 34), 51 to 55 per cent of the total Indian families may be nuclear (Mukherjee, R., 1971a: 70-2).

This sharp departure from the assumed wish and effort of the people would be caused by the age at which they (in general) consummate their marriage, their fertility pattern, and their expectation of life (Mukherjee, R., 1971a: 46-76). Thus, certain societal factors which are not usually taken into account to explain the nuclearization of joint families in India (or elsewhere) may not allow about half of the Indian families to attain a joint structure irrespective of the desire of the people to do so. Evidently, therefore, the above explanation which is relevant and necessary, and follows from the kind of data a sociologist usually deals with, would not be efficient for the Indian society as a whole.

For some of the thirty communities of people, however, the percentage incidence of nuclear structures is above 55; such as, for the state of West Bengal. In these instances, therefore, the explanation of *break-up* of the joint structure is relevant, necessary and efficient. But it may not be sufficient because, after the break-up of a joint family structure, the corresponding nuclear units may pursue the course of nuclearization or *eventually form joint families of procreation*. The latter process is possibly operating in some parts of India (e.g. in West Bengal, as our unpublished study of change in family structures over 1947-66 indicates). According to this process, a person born in a joint

family may form a nuclear family of procreation but he or she dies in his/her joint family of procreation because at least one of the sons stays in the "stem" family after his marriage and the appearance of his children. The joint family system, thus, maintains its hold over the society in a particular manner, i.e. despite a temporary phase of break-up of the joint family structures; and this process may register, at a point of time, the incidence of two-thirds of all families as nuclear (Mukherjee, R., 1971a: 72-4).

It, therefore, follows that the fact of nuclearization of joint family structures—the exploration of which is regarded to be one of the current commitments of Indian sociology—cannot be just explained in the light of available theories and the corresponding empirical findings. A careful, precise and comprehensive diagnosis of the situation is called for, as suggested elsewhere (Mukherjee, R., 1971a: 84-104).

5. *An explanation may be relevant, necessary, efficient and sufficient, but the demand of the discipline may be beyond explanation.* Over centuries there have been indications of one kind or another to anticipate that the caste system of India will soon disappear (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1971b: 351-52); and yet the question "what will it be?" remains as valid regarding this system as before. In this context, "the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently 'twice-born' caste" (Srinivas, 1966: 6) is probably as old as the caste system itself, as the *smriti* and the *purana* (and even the *sruti*) literature of ancient India testifies (e.g. the caste hierarchies recorded in the *Manusmriti*, *Brihaddhar-mapurana*, *Brahmabaibartapurana*, etc.). At any rate, the process of "sanskritization" as defined above, which "results only in positional changes in the system and *does not lead to any structural change*". (Srinivas, 1966: 7; italics added), is the same as that described by Lyall and Risley in the 19th century as "aryanisation" (Lyall 1822: 102; Risley 1891: I. xxvii-xxx). The concept of aryanisation or sanskritization is thus relevant, necessary and efficient, and may be sufficient to explain the fact that all that is happening to the caste system over centuries amounts to casual fluctuations around its central tendency to survive by means of safety valves like the process embodied in this concept. But the tasks of the Indian sociology today lie beyond such an explanation. It is to know "what will it be?" about the caste system.

In that context, the concept of "dominant caste" may be relevant since the structural and functional characteristics of the social groups implied by the concept may be the indicators of "what will it be?" regarding the Indian caste system. The definitional attributes of "dominant caste" are : (1) "sizeable amount of arable land", (2) "strength of numbers", (3) "high place in the local hierarchy", (4) "western education", (5) "jobs in the administration", and (6) "urban sources of income" (Srinivas, 1966: 10-11). Unless, therefore, the 6 attributes are grouped in some way, sequentially or transferably, there can be $(2^6 - 1) = 63$ variants of the "dominant caste", which would drastically affect the analytical relevance of the concept. For, in any societal context, one caste may register "dominance" over others according to the first attribute but not the second, and so on in all possible combinations of the 6 attributes. On the other hand, if the identification of "dominant caste" in terms of any one configuration of these attributes is left to the judgement of individual researchers, the concept will lose its objectivity. However, the available data on contemporary India suggest that two counteracting social groups may be objectively identified through this concept.

The social group (a particular caste), identified in terms of possession of "sizeable amount of arable land", would belong to the landed interest in the society, which has a propensity to "jobs in the administration" (at any rate, the better kind of jobs) and links with "urban sources of income". Also, in consequence of these characteristics, the social group would have the largest scope for obtaining "a high place in the local hierarchy", while "western education" may be a pre-requisite to high-grade jobs in the administration or a corollary to the elite character of the group. But this group cannot have the "strength of numbers" because land in India is concentrated in the hand of relatively few persons (and not the multitude) in the society (National Sample Survey, 1958: 133; 1970: 22). Conversely, therefore, another social group (a particular caste) may be identified which stands out because of its population size, belongs to the populace with little or no arable land, none or only low jobs in the administration, hardly any urban source of income (in addition), and obviously little or no western education in the circumstances. Thus, the definitional attributes 1 and 3-6 of "dominant caste" are likely to be positively correlated and to be concentrated in one social group, and this cluster of attributes is likely to be negatively correlated with the remaining attribute 2 characterizing another social group.

This way, the concept of "dominant caste" can be of analytical relevance to Indian sociology; it can thus be rescued from the esoteric judgement of different sociologists who may, accordingly, identify a "dominant caste" in 63 different ways. But this means that a "dominant caste" characterized by the attributes 1 and 3-6 will represent the "haves" in the society, and another "dominant caste" characterised by the attribute 2 and the reverse characteristics of the attributes 1 and 3-6 will represent the "have-nots" in the society. It follows that the concept of "dominant caste" will eventually call for an examination of "caste" and "class" as *homologous entities* (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1957) or, at any rate, as *analogous and interlocking entities within a system* instead of being regarded as representing *two different systems* (viz., the former as "closed" since it is based on ascriptive attributes, and the latter as "open" since it is based on acquired attributes). Significantly, the concept of "dominant caste" is based entirely on what are labelled as "acquired" (and not "ascriptive") attributes.

Evidently, from such or a similar consideration as above, the relevance of the concept of "dominant caste" to Indian sociology, at the present stage of its development, would be substantiated. And, following therefrom, the necessity, efficiency and sufficiency of the concept to denote "what will it be?" regarding the caste system would be duly appraised. All these, however, refer to *diagnosis* and not to *explanation*.

More examples—relating to rural or industrial sociology, stratification and polarization in society; sociology of development, education, socio-religious movements, nation-building, etc.—may be cited to substantiate the 6 categories of explanation just discussed. Space, however, forbids the attempt. Also it may not be necessary to dwell on details since all of them concern the capacity of contemporary sociology to answer the "Indian question". The relevant issue here as with respect to any other country and any other society would be: how can sociology be the most useful to understand society and to mould it for enduring peace, greater prosperity, and continual progress.

The present problems in Indian sociology are thus epitomized in its role in India today vis-a-vis other social science disciplines.

In this context, sociology in India has so far been secondary to economics as a replica of the world phenomenon (cf. Myrdal 1968: I. 28). There were two convincing reasons for the leadership of economics in Indian social sciences: (1) during the British rule, the effects of colonialism were most vividly felt in the economic life of the people; and (2) after independence, the principal problem of India became "the planned growth of industry, greater production, most just distribution, higher standard of living, and thus the elimination of the appalling poverty that crushed our people" (Nehru 1942: 11). However, as found in virtually all the "developing" societies (and, for that matter, in the world at large), the role of economics in India has been unilaterally emphasized with the implication of an *invariable* relation of changes from the economic to the social, and from the social to the ideological.

The anticipation, of course, may be valid over a wide time-span and a generalized perspective of human society; but, with reference to a segment of that society and within a relatively short time-span, it may lose its precision and even validity. Marx, who is regarded by many to have insisted under any circumstances upon a course of unidirectional change from the economic to the social and then to the ideological, has pointed out exceptions to this within time-place limits (e.g. Marx 1953: 399-400). Also Engels has clearly stated: "It is not that the economic position is the *cause and alone active*, while everything else only has a passive effect" (Engels 1943: 417). We may thus muster a general agreement on the fact that economic progress may not synchronize *ipso facto* with social and ideological progress; instead, the social and ideological situation may stand in the way of economic development.

In India, at any rate, such a situation is evident from the 1960s, which was indicated even in 1955 by D. P. Mukerji (quoted earlier). This became so obvious later that Myrdal commented in 1968: "The postponement of the promised social and economic revolution, which was to follow India's political revolution, is thus in danger of becoming permanent" (Myrdal, 1968: I. 278). Whether or not the comment is too drastic, it was admitted in an official review of Gunnar Myrdal's *Asian Drama* in the Journal of the Indian Planning Commission that: "If planning from below has not developed, it is because a whole group of economists drawn from various persuasions and associated with India's Planning Commission seldom moved beyond the mechanical application of Western experience" (Thapar, 1968: 5). It is of crucial importance, therefore, to define the focus of social science research in India today and the corresponding task of the social scientists.

Myrdal has succinctly stated that the task of the social scientists today is to evolve a "social technology, which would have meant utilizing their assembled stock of knowledge about the social facts to prescribe how social change could be induced and controlled in a rational and wholesome way" (Myrdal, 1956: 173). On this account, sociology can assume the leadership of all social science disciplines because: "Sociology has a floor and a ceiling, like any other science, but its speciality consists in its floor being the ground floor of all types of social disciplines, and its ceiling remaining open to the sky" (Mukerji, 1961: 20). But this responsibility of sociology to unravel the dynamics of society as a whole would not be discharged through mere description and explanation, both in

respect of the intrinsic characteristics of the concepts and formulations in the discipline (as just discussed) and their application.

Indian sociology is, no doubt, continually increasing its stock of knowledge but in the social arena it has mostly played the second fiddle to the current economic, political and administrative theses by (a) providing "facts" to the planners, administrators, etc., (b) showing the achievement or failure of some planned programmes for development, (c) highlighting some problems, auxiliary or ancillary to economic planning, and so on. Even the positive advocacy for "institutional planning" has so far taken the form of vague generalizations concerning the non-economic life of the people (Singh, B., 1955: 358-69; Mukerjee, R.K., 1964b: 42-3). On the other side, the suspicion of a growing "official" hold on sociology in India and of meta-scientific influence on fixation of research priorities haunts the field of social research today, an apprehension expressed by Srinivas a decade earlier (Srinivas, 1962: 143-4, 145-6). Therefore, at this crossroad of its development, sociology in India must have a role of its own to play in order to answer the "Indian question" in the present context. This role, I would submit, lies in assuming the responsibility to identify the soft spots in the social organism, viz., *those vulnerable regions of the social structure through which change in the society is, or can be, effected.*

We are familiar with explicit formulation of soft spots in a broad canvas of social events. To Marx and Engels, the social group identified as the "proletariat" (and not the "poor" *per se*) represents the soft spot to bring about a revolutionary change in the world society (Marx and Engels, 1951: 40:3, 51-60). In some later Marxist variations, a particular section of the peasantry represents the corresponding soft spot, or it may be additionally or exclusively represented by the "nonconformist young intelligentsia" (Marcuse, 1969: 57), and so on. On the other hand, from a different focus on the world societies (viz., of stagnation in reference to development and not of revolutionary change), Myrdal characterizes the "under-developed countries" as "soft states" (Myrdal, 1971: 211). However, with reference to a small canvas of social events, we frequently find that while the concept of soft spots was not precisely stated, it has been implied at the end of many conscientiously undertaken pieces of explanatory research. As mentioned earlier, this is evident from the later writings of McClelland on achievement-orientation as a generalized explanatory proposition. Also the present attempt in India (as elsewhere) to appreciate social reality through models and countermodels contains the same implications; such as when we encounter the model of "tradition to modernity" (Shils, 1961; Shah and Rao, 1965) and the countermodel of "modernity of tradition" (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1967), "an analytical scheme for the study of social change in India" (Beteille, 1966) and its appraisal (Dube, 1967), and so on.

All these models—national or international in claim or coverage—are undoubtedly useful since they highlight particular areas and methods of investigation. But models are like scaffoldings erected to build a house, and they are therefore specific to the design of the house and the resources which go into its construction. Hence, when the house is so complex and universalized as a multi-phenomenal social organism,—the ultimate aim of research being to ascertain an exact design of it—a particular model cannot but be inadequate. Thus, even regarding India for which the coverage of available information is very large, Hagen stated while propounding the theory of social change: "The situation in India has seemed to me too complex to lend itself to analysis in terms

of the analytical model presented in this volume without more intensive examination than it has been possible to give it" (Hagen, 1962: 427-28).

It follows that what is needed for India (as for any country in the world) is a comprehensive and concerted attempt to identify the soft spots in the social organism, for which all explanatory models and evermore efficient description and explanation of the societal phenomena and the society itself would be relevant and necessary. The identification of the soft spots, however, is a diagnostic proposition, as I have illustrated in reference to India when I put forward the concept of the soft spot (cf. Mukherjee, R., 1965: 109-65). Also this is a task particularly appropriate for the discipline of sociology to undertake in collaboration with (and possibly by assuming the leadership of) all other social science disciplines, as I have indicated elsewhere (Mukherjee, R., 1969; 1970). I would submit, therefore, that in view of the current stage of development of the discipline and the social demand on it at present, Indian sociology (or, for that matter, sociology in any country) must enter into the diagnostic stage in order to resolve the problems it now faces.

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Sociology

THE PURPOSE of this paper is to show how sociologists in India could combine an effort to improve the relevance of their researches to the problems of the day by employing sophisticated theoretical frameworks. The field bristles with difficulties because of controversies regarding the nature of sociological theory itself. Attempt will be made to offer some comments on this problem also.

THEORY BUILDING IN SOCIOLOGY

Whitehead (1959 : 73) has very rightly observed that "The Secret of progress is the speculative interest in abstract schemes of morphology". He further says that the task of Cosmology is twofold. It restrains the aberrations of the mere undisciplined imagination; moreover, it emphasises those factors in experience which are stable. He also discusses the problem of the confrontation between speculative reason and experience. He further points out, however, that there can be no experience without a system of ideas and as such the fact of experience is permeated with thought. On the other hand speculative reason has to be chained by the rigours of methodology and logical procedure. Therefore, there is no denying the need for a properly developed theory in sociology insofar as it claims to be an analytical endeavour. A theory is a system of inter-related definitions and hypotheses. A frame of reference is a set of more or less inter-related definitions.

To the above two tasks Zetterberg (1954) adds descriptive study as the enterprise of describing some aspect of the world, which leads one to develop theories. Then again there is a verificational study which is an attempt to investigate whether a theory is probable or improbable. Thus, on the one hand there is theory and on the other there is description and the two are inter-related, or rather the next step of description is some attempt at theorizing. Merton (1957) defines sociological theory as logically interconnected conceptions and emphasizes his concern for conceptions which are limited

and modest in scope rather than grandiose and all-embracing. He emphasises the importance of middle-range theories. Zetterberg also distinguishes between inclusive and miniature theories and further observes that inclusive theories flourish where miniature theories are found wanting. Discussing the problems attendant on general theories, Merton (1957 : 9) observes that "sociological theory consists of general orientations toward data suggesting types of variables which need somehow to be taken into account, rather than clear verifiable statements of relationships between specified variables". There can be thus hardly any denying of the necessity and importance of theoretical approach.

Merton elaborates upon the theoretic functions of research and maintains that one has to emphasize the creative role of expressive theory as well as that of observation too. According to him, research plays an active role and performs four major function, which help shape the development of theory. Empirical research initiates, it reformulates, it deflects, and it clarifies theory. Merton's observations about the serendipity pattern are too well-known to need any elaboration. He further states that it is through research that the need for the recasting of theory is felt. Then, again, refocussing the theoretical interest is also necessitated by research in the sense that new methods of empirical research exert pressure for new foci of theoretic interest such as the one caused by small group research and the reassertation of the importance and significance of primary groups even in complex societies. Moreover, empirical research necessitates clarification and extension of concepts e.g. Shils has tried to both clarify and extend the concept of charisma (Shils, 1965).

THEORY BUILDING IN SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

It is observed that in India, so far, theory building has not been attempted on any worth-while scale on the basis of our own struggle to grapple with our own environment. It is also expected that one would suggest remedies for such weakness if it exists. In this context, reference must be made to the protracted controversy between the exponents of two different views. One school of thought firmly believes that the nature of Indian society being what it is, with all its special cultural values, beliefs, etc., its aims and goals of existence as accepted, or rather professed, by the Hindus; its concept of *dharma* as well as the acceptance of the principles of re-birth and *karma* concepts and formulations evolved in a western setting would not at all be applicable to the analysis and understanding of social processes and institutions in India. Pocock, Dumont, Leach and some others are exponents of this school of thought and some Indian scholars, too, like Radha Kamal Mukerji, D. P. Mukerji, M. N. Srinivas, A. K. Saran are quite sceptical about the use of sociological concepts as they have been developed with reference to western societies.

It is maintained, along with Max Weber, that Indian society is a unique cultural configuration. However, after stating this, Weber proceeded to make use of the comparative method for the study of various social systems and in his attempt to do so he evolved a typology of societies. While one may accept the position that each society is a unique configuration, one also has to take into account the dynamics of change and the impact of emulation and reference group behaviour. It is not only that there has been a technological and industrial revolution but there has been a revolution of

ideas too. Therefore, when new ideas impinge on any system, efforts are made to change that society. Moreover, for any scientific understanding of social processes and phenomena, it is necessary to employ ideas, concepts, and formulations which are universal rather than specific to a given society. The purpose of scientific endeavour is one's desire to arrive at general propositions. It is necessary to test certain concepts which may have been developed even in altogether a different set of circumstances. The aim of science is to extend the universal features of concepts and to reduce their specificity. In sociology, too, one cannot for ever deny the responsibility of testing available concepts and theoretical formulations. Of course, they have to be tested and used with the utmost degree of openness of mind and readiness to amend, modify and even reject them if necessary. It is maintained that hardly an attempt has been made to develop our own theoretical concepts. All scientific endeavour is a process of invention, discovery and diffusion. Therefore, there is nothing particularly wrong if in the field of sociology we start with concepts and theories, as they have been made available to us, with an open mind and with a keen desire to test them empirically.

In fact quite a debate has been going on in India during the last decade and more about what should be the proper nature of sociology in India, and for India. Listing together two different types of sociology for India, Yogendra Singh (1965:34) observes that "the task for construction of a Sociology for India then will be, to establish parallels and correspondences between the general and specific levels of sociological concepts". He also points out that according to the other point of view uniqueness of Indian culture is emphasized : it is recommended that attempts should be made to understand Indian society only in its own terms and that, therefore, concepts and formulations derived from other situations would not be meaningful. However, Yogendra Singh (1965 : 36) also points out that "cultural reality is not another fact of the social reality but its substratum, the basic element, from which the social structure is derived and rendered comprehensible". I also have pointed out that what are regarded as unique characteristics of Indian culture are really nothing but ideas and value systems which have implications for legitimising and maintaining the structural arrangements (Damle, 1955). Thus, I have written that :

The concept of Purushartha in the Indian setting provides the meaning of existence for the people, and takes care of the functional sub-systems like adaptation, goal-attainment, pattern-maintenance and integration. Similarly, Dharma is also sought to be interpreted in philosophical and mystical terms and effort is made to contend that there is no parallel to this concept in western sociology. However, Dharma can be regarded as parallel to the entire theory of role obligations. The idea of Karma and re-birth legitimise social order in all its ramifications and therefore, put a premium on pattern maintaining. As in all other societies the frame of a reference for sociological study would be provided by the study of inter-relationship between personality, culture and social system. Yogendra Singh comes to the conclusion that "Sociology would endeavour to understand uniformities of social behaviour and social relationships within the framework of peoples, values and ideas both as projections and as realities". Social behaviour would be *representation* as well as *thing*; in the former sense it would have an ideational quality and in the latter form it would constitute

an objective relational category. The polarity between a sociology for India as a sub-system of general theory of sociology, and as a system of specific cultural categories representing the uniqueness of socio-cultural phenomena would have been bridged, since the "cultural" would in every case correspond to the "social" (Damle, 1955:36-7).

Weber, it will be recalled, emphasised the great importance of the problem of *subjective* meaning in addition to that of *pure* type of meaning. While it is conceded that the idea and value systems are peculiar and specific to a given cultural and social system, one has also to bear in mind that in order to understand them one has to start by using the method of analogy and proceed to work out the universals in respect of them. Otherwise, it would be impossible to talk meaningfully and particularly scientifically about any two societies. Thus, theory building in sociology assumes special importance in India and also poses certain problems. The controversy of the insider and the outsider is too well-known to need any elaboration. The understanding of the insider should not be regarded as of an esoteric nature but one that reveals structural unity and coherence. Srinivas, for instance, studies the structural unity of Hindu religion and society. It is necessary to give up the undue emphasis on cultural specificities and differences and try to understand common features between Indian society and other societies. It is equally necessary to hazard utilization of sociological concepts and theories as they have been developed elsewhere in the Indian context. This involves a proper awareness of such concepts and theories and also one's capacity to use them meaningfully in a different situation, such as the Indian. This further means that adequate training in concepts and theories and particularly in their operationalization is necessary. For every concept and theory, let me repeat, has to be tested empirically. Then alone would it be possible to refine, modify, accept or reject concepts and theories.

I will now discuss certain studies carried out in India by Indian scholars with a view to test certain concepts and formulations in relation to Indian society. It was pointed out earlier that there are two types of theories, viz., general and miniature theories. While it is conceded that it is very difficult to employ general theories for a sheer intellectual discipline and training, it is necessary not only to be acquainted with them, but also to try to apply such theory at a macro-level. This is precisely what has been attempted by M. C. Sekhar in his study of "Social Change in India—First Decade of Planning". On the other hand K.C. Alexander, T.K. Oommen, P.H. Reddy, Y. B. Damle and several others, have tried to employ theories of the middle range.

While it is necessary to have theoretical perspective, one must not lose sight of the fact of social relevance while indulging in theoretical exercise of any kind. The point whether sociology as a science can address itself to the problem of progress has been debated for centuries and there is no definite conclusive evidence as to whether sociology should concern itself with the discussion of progress. However, there is also no denying that sociology has to concern itself with discussion of progress in the sense that any human society is necessarily guided by a value system, which is subject to revision and change both due to acculturation and moral conviction. Social reality is to a large extent guided by moral instructions and as such discussion of progress from the point of view of moral and ethical standards is certainly imperative. In such a discussion one is likely to make a distinction between innovational and non-innovational progress. As Keynes used to say that the 20th century is a century of ideas and as such ideas, both rational

and moral, exert a great deal of influence in shaping social reality. Sociology, therefore, must concern itself with not only a discussion of ethical and moral ideas, but should also be able to provide guidelines for preferring certain idea systems in order to shape social reality in a given direction. As a matter of fact, the entire ferment in the third world, viz., developing countries reflects concern of the people for shaping social reality according to certain ethical and moral ideas. It is not only a question of attaining economic prosperity, technological development, and industrial and scientific revolution. There is also a great insistence on changing the social and moral order in consonance with new values which people espouse. As such it is very necessary for a student of sociology to make evaluative study analysis of the central value system which guided different societies and by way of illustration one can say that social stratification largely reflects the central value system prevailing in society in respect of work, distribution of rewards and social recognition.

In my study on "Social Differential and Differential in Emoluments" (Damle:1955) I had raised this problem, viz., relationship between work, remuneration and status with reference to three social systems, viz., the English society, the Indian society and the Soviet society. These three societies were studied as representing various models and as such one could view the problem in its multifarious dimensions. On the basis of such examination it was found that even in a centrally planned society, the problem of relationship between remuneration and skill could not be neglected. In the Indian case, the problem was complicated by working together of caste and class or rather the predominance of the working of the caste principle of social organization, in a way, class was superimposed on the caste-system. In the case of English society there has been a gradual transition from status to contract and the more or less stable association between social status, skill and remuneration; while in the Indian case such a relationship had not developed. Even in the Soviet case as mentioned above, any attempt to disassociate skill, remuneration, and status proved ineffective and as such this association was reinstated though not formally acceptable at least in reality which is evinced by the data furnished. Thus the system of stratification, and particularly the problem of work, remuneration, and status is very crucial for understanding of any social system and one can definitely say that in all developing societies, an attempt is being made to work out a positive relationship between these three factors and not allow disjunction between these three. Work has to be paid according to its social relevance and that is an inescapable fact. Of course, this also takes into account that every one will have to be paid a minimum living wage and as we know, the concept of living wage because of change in terms of new ideas and aspirations. Thus we find that the central value-system has to be squarely analysed and in which case there will be no fear of lack of social relevance as far as sociological studies are concerned. By tackling the problem of central value system one can analyse the system more comprehensively and one can also throw up new moral and ethical ideas as to the kind of direction in which the change is needed and change is feasible. The task of sociology is therefore theoretical essentially and yet it can also offer solutions to the problems.

Sekhar (1968) has made a study of planned social change during the first decade of planning. Economic planning was accepted as an instrument of economic development and societal transformation. In order to analyse the change, Sekhar started by presenting a background picture of social structure in India on the eve of planning.

The methods of planning including the ideological and value re-orientations underlying them have been studied. The impact of planning on different aspects of social system are analysed and Parsonian system of analysis of society has been adopted, emphasizing the importance of the creation of new values and ideologies, the existence of old and new structures at the same time, and also the existence of vested interests and their capacity to resist change. The analysis of programmed social change has been undertaken and the study of community development has been gone into from this point of view. The village-level worker has been studied as an agent of social change. It is pointed out that as to how institutionalized change which has been attempted in India on such a large scale through economic planning impinges on the different elements of the social structure, causing refraction. Thus social change cannot be uniform and cannot affect the various strata equally.

By virtue of the fact that both the old and the new structures exist simultaneously, there was bound to be a transitional anomie, then again the social background of the elite also created certain problems for their acceptance by the common people. The traditional gulf between the elite and the common man in India has been responsible for prejudices, suspicions, and lack of acceptance about new ideas and solutions. Economic development was expected to provide panacea for societal transformation. However, as a result of the existing system of stratification certain sections of population tended to gain considerably out of economic development perpetuating the gap between the well-to-do and the poorer sections. In order to counteract such a gap charismatic movements such as *Bhudan* and the *Gramdan* movements have been developed and permitted. Sekhar analyses the efficacy or otherwise of such movements and points out that such movements tend to favour stability rather than radical transformation. He ascribes this phenomena to the fact that these movements have largely used traditional Hindu symbolism to promote radically modern values. Sekhar points out that while new institutions have been created they have not been acceptable to the people. Social change is analysed by employing pattern variables. It is pointed out that no radical transformation has been possible due to the simultaneous existence and persistence of old and new structures. With the help of theoretical apparatus used by him, Sekhar has been able to discuss the problem at a macro-level, pointing out important connections between the various sectors and also the difficulties inherent in integrating them effectively. Thus in a study of social change in India, Sekhar has undertaken a macro-analysis of Indian Society by making use of "inclusive theory".

Alexander (1958) examines the problem of social mobility in Kerala in the context of formulation of reference group theory. Merton had stated that reference group behaviour would not be functional either for the individual or for the group in a relatively closed society such as that exemplified by caste system. Alexander wanted to test this particular formulation with reference to Pulayars, an untouchable caste in Kerala. He begins with the assumption that reference group behaviour would probably have different manifestations in the Indian context from those in western societies. He refers to my observation that in a caste situation the ultimate absorption in a group in a higher caste is not possible although there is upward mobility. Alexander choose his sample from various environments including rural and urban so as to make it representative. He also wanted to find out the differential influences of Christianity, Hinduism and organisation, secular education and occupations in respect of thwarting

or promoting social mobility. Inquiring into the problem of reference group behaviour and anticipatory socialisation in respect of various aspects of the social structure like marriage, family, religion, education, occupation, styles of living, he discusses the changing notions of caste hierarchy which are reflected in the changes regarding mode of addressing members of the higher castes viz., giving up of the use of abject expressions and yearn for referring to the things associated with the Pulayas; and reduction of social disabilities has reflected in serving food to Pulayas by the higher castes and removing restrictions on the entrance of Pulayas into the houses of the higher caste etc. Alexander points out that the change in the status of the Pulayas is clearly the consequence of anticipatory socialisation. In certain cases due to the greater secular achievements Pulayas have been even able to cross the barrier of untouchability. He adds that "in spite of such a rigid social system, dampening religious philosophy, lack of facilities, limited scope for upward mobility and their extremely low status in the relatively close society, the Pulayas have adopted the higher castes occupying authoritative and prestigious status in the society rather than castes occupying a status similar to them as reference group". (Alexander, 1968 : 227 and 258). Efforts made by members of the low status group to enhance their status by emulating members of higher castes had poor fruit. Such emulation need not give rise to hostility on the part of the parent group and thus those reoriented towards the out group may not become impirical members. In fact such members can become the elite of the low status group. Reference to Dr. Ambedkar and some of the highly educated nav-budhas would be in order here. Then again reference group behaviour and consequent anticipatory socialisation by the members of a lower stratum in a relatively closed society would positively improve the status of such groups. Therefore, anticipatory socialisation need not be dysfunctional; the other individuals or groups can be a source of mobility even in a relatively closed society. In terms of his empirical investigations, Alexander has thus suggested certain modifications to the formulations of Merton and has demonstrated as to how theory can be enriched by empirical work particularly when it is being tested in a different social situation altogether. Apart from the theoretical relevance of this study, one should also mention that it has brought practical significance in the sense that it reflects the growing dissatisfaction amongst the erstwhile lower strata about their lowly status and their keen desire to rise in a social hierarchy by taking to secular education and occupations.

Oommen (1972) who made a study of "Charisma, Stability and Change--An analysis of Bhoodan-Gramdan movement" in India starts by questioning Weber's delineation of charismatic authority and points out that one may legitimately refer to the power of charismatic leaders while there is no such thing as authority, since legitimacy and sanctions are attached to the office that a leader occupies. 'The power of a charismatic leader depends on voluntary obedience by the followers. Then he points out as to how leaders like Nehru, Nkrumah, Khrushchev, Nassar had authority which emanated from legal rational sources on which was superimposed charisma. Thus Oommen points out that the concept of charisma needs an extension to secular context. Then again, the quantity and quality of charismatic authority differ from system to system and social situations. He points out that charisma and charismatic leadership cannot be divorced from the nature and type of the social system. Similarly, the attributes of charisma are contextual because they are in response to the situational means and demands.

Charisma not only helps innovate but can also help maintain and stabilize a social order. It is also pointed out that a rational-legal leader can also be a prophet of modernization and change through the use of governmental machinery. On the other hand, a charismatic leader need not necessarily be an agent of change. Charisma is attributed to personality either when the ends which certain leaders want to attain are so appealing to the people or because the means they want to employ are so difficult, and have behind them the sanction of symbolism rooted in a lost tradition. Oommen refers to Gandhi and Vinoba as exponents of the latter case. The emergence of charisma is explained in terms of the conditions. In the first place, awareness has to be created among the people of the social problems and of the possible solutions to the problems. Then again a new approach has to be evolved for the solutions of the problems. A goal to be chosen for such consideration and attention should be one which is widely acclaimed by the people, e.g. land-hunger in India.

Oommen maintains that charisma has to be transformed into movements in order to further realization of goals. He mentions that nationalistic movements in an under-developed country are oriented to both modern and traditional values, thereby emphasizing the change-orientedness or system stability and solidarity. Analyzing the emergence of social movements, Oommen points out that social movements emerge due to certain mal-integration in society. However, two distinct kinds of movements, such as ideological movements and organisational movements, emerge and of course the third type of movement is charismatic movement. It is pointed out that a charismatic movement emerges from a critical situation as a result of stresses and strains in the social structure. The origin of the movement is couched in mysterious terms. The end or goal of the movement is the transformation of the social system which may be "system change, revival, restoration, protection or stability" (Danile, 1959). The movement throws new ideas or new modes to deal with the existing problems. Charisma is uppermost although the need for ideology is not denied. The relationship between the charismatic leaders and their followers should be of a purely voluntary nature and there should be no office of any kind. The programme of the movement should be essentially non-economic and the movement should be undertaken with a sense of mission. However, Oommen also points out that a charismatic movement to be really effective must develop an ideological base as well as a minimum amount of organization. Of course, the development of ideology and organization ultimately is responsible for reducing the element of charisma. As a result of the erosion of charisma such a movement might emphasize pattern maintenance and tension management. Oommen does not point out that some charismatic movements emerged in response to certain radical ideologies and programmes with a view to diverting the attention of the people from such radical ideologies and programmes and that, therefore, unwittingly such movements may contribute to tension management and pattern maintenance. It is also emphasized by Oommen that while a purely charismatic movement can propel change it cannot sustain the process of change for any long period.

Oommen on the basis of his empirical investigation of *Gramdan* movement as an illustration on charismatic movement points out certain incongruities. Thus, if charismatic appeal is uppermost then ideology will be accorded subordinate importance. Equal emphasis on tradition and modernity by the movement will analyze amongst its adherence both revivalist and modern people, which may not ultimately be conducive

to the goal of the movement. Then again, if the movement is manned or particularly controlled by career seekers and vested interests, it will ultimately destroy the movement. Any association with the government will further reduce the efficacy of such movements. Undue emphasis on ameliorative programmes gives rise to the negation of the very principles which are upheld by such movements. In the context of *Gramdan*, there is getting together of the donors and the donees whose interests are incongruent with each other and as such their cooperation in respect of movement becomes questionable. The purpose of movement is to distribute lands amongst the landless and in the case of *Gramdan*, the upper caste of the landed elements have also been equal beneficiaries of land distribution and therefore, the real aim of the movement has not been realized. Similarly the distribution of land is not effected on a rational basis due to lack of proper organization. *Gramdan* did not create a kind of social order which it was expected to create. The cleavage in ideological and organizational reorientation makes it difficult for such movements to become agents of radical change. In short, charismatic movement cannot sustain social change. Thus, with the analysis of charisma and social movements efforts have been made to revise concepts and to suggest extensions of concepts and theories.

In his study of education in a cross-cultural setting, Reddy (1967) investigates into the problems of non-Maharashtrian students, who migrated to Poona for higher studies from different parts of the country. Reddy wanted to study the problems of students caused by their exposure to a different social system or sub-system. He has suggested the concept of optimization of gratification, in place of the usual concept of adjustment used in cross-cultural study. Enquiring into the primacy of various goals which the students want to attain, Reddy makes use of the functional problem. The reference group behaviour of the students is analyzed and the concept of relative deprivation is meaningfully used in order to pinpoint attention on the problems felt by the students. The impact of educational sojourn on the students has been studied in respect of certain changes in the outlook and attitudes regarding religion, caste, region, nation, etc. Similarly, individuation, autonomy development, intellectual maturation, etc. have also been studied. The study employs meaningfully the concept of relative deprivation and reference group theory. Instead of merely listing the problems faced by such students an attempt is made to explain them in theoretical terms.

In my study of communication of modern ideas and knowledge (Damle, 1955 a) in Indian villages, I have enquired into the problem of dissemination and acceptance of new information and ideas by employing the paradigm of functionalism as given by Merton. On the basis of his empirical study I have pointed out that only such items which have a functional relevance for the people in the village, find acceptance.

In a study of auxiliary nurse midwife, a study in institutionalised change, I have analyzed the problem of change in terms of the status of the change agent, social stratification, cultural beliefs and prejudices, etc. (Damle, 1959). Thus it is pointed out that a change agent cannot be effective unless and until he or she enjoys requisite status in society. Similarly, there is no point in over-burdening change agents with responsibilities for which they have not been adequately trained or prepared. The intricacies involved in bringing about change are discussed in structural functional terms.

My study of social structure of intellectuals (Damle, 1968) in Poona, has brought up certain unexpected relationships. Thus enquiring into the social background of university

and college teachers in Poona, it was found that the sons and daughters of fathers who are themselves highly educated and highly placed in occupational structures were continuously subjected to pressure of invidious comparison between themselves and their fathers giving rise to strain and dissatisfaction with their own profession. It was found that such persons tended to be the least involved professionally.

In my study of college youth in Poona, I wanted to examine the process of socialisation and autonomy development in the context of social structural features like family and kinship, caste, region and language, education, poor groups, etc. (Damle, 1966). It was found that socialisation and individuation are not always antithetical to each other and that certain types of socialisation are on the other hand conducive to individuation. The process of change from traditional ideas and values to modern ideas and values was studied with reference to the students and analysis was made of the forces and mechanism which facilitated such a change. It was found that voluntary groupings played an important role in effecting autonomy development. The scheme of pattern variables was utilised for analysing change. Structural functional method was employed.

Bureaucracy and its role in agricultural development was studied (Damle, 1972) with a view to finding out the patterns of interaction between bureaucracy, the farmers, and the leaders. It was hypothesised that the usual formulations about bureaucracy as given by Weber in respect of impersonality, social distance, concept of office, and so on may not be relevant in a field situation. Particularly when bureaucrats had to work as agents of change and facilitators of development, what would be the expectations of a bureaucrat on the part of the people, whom he was supposed to serve? In the light of the empirical study certain modifications have been suggested to the Weberian theory of bureaucracy.

A study of two-hundred life termers (Damle, 1972 a) in order to find out the problems of prisoners in the jail setting and also to find out if the various measures adopted to train the prisoners for rehabilitation after release were meaningful at all. The problem was studied by focussing attention on the central institution, viz., family and its disruption caused by the arrest of the prisoner. By posing the problem in this manner, it was found that most of the problems experienced by the prisoners centered round his relationship with his family members or rather the difficulties that he has experienced in this respect. The estrangement between the prisoner and his family seemed to give rise to most of the problems. As a matter of fact, the family was the worse sufferer. This also resulted in the alienation between the prisoner and his family, complicating or rather queering the pitch for rehabilitation.

Therefore, in order to have effective programmes of rehabilitation, it was necessary to accord proper importance to the family of the prisoner and prisoner's relationship with the family. In fact the family of the prisoner needed all the support, both economic and moral as well as legal in order that the family would not be disorganised. In fact such disorganization of family would make it impossible for the prisoner to be rehabilitated. Any ameliorative action should be based on scientific analysis of the problems. Here also structural functional approach was employed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the beginning of this paper, I had mentioned that theory building in sociology is best done with certain problems and some of the problems have been indicated

in the light of the discussion of such problems as well as the intrinsic importance of utilisation of existing theoretical framework with an open mind so that theories which are appropriate to the Indian setting can be evolved both by modification of the existing theories and by extensions of both concepts and formulations. It was also pointed out as to how in this quest for theory building or rather theory testing it would be dangerous to lose sight of the dimension of social relevance. As such it has been brought out that problems which have implication for central value system such as social stratification should be undertaken for analysis. Then again it is necessary to hazard macro-sociological approach in order to grapple with the overall problem of social change in India. In any case such an attempt would throw up the important variables involved in the analysis of social change. As a matter of fact the various macro-studies can be fruitfully undertaken as a result of the throwing up of different variables through a macro-study. It is equally important to engage oneself in middle range theoretical problems in order to intensively study the existing social reality. The various steps which have been referred to by way of illustration, point out as to how the application of theoretical frameworks can help in a better understanding of some of the concrete problems with which Indian society is beset. In the case of India, deliberate efforts are being made to institute change and it is necessary to be aware of the impediments to change which can be properly undertaken with the help of theoretical framework for the analysis of social change. There has been a significant rise in the level of aspirations of the people which is reflected in impatience and unrest of various kinds but it is equally necessary to understand the limitations which are inherent in successfully instituting change in the desired direction. The study of *Gramdan*, mentioned above, reiterates this point. Social relevance of research in India should provide the focus for the selection of research problems while the best way to undertake these research problems would be to employ and test theoretical frameworks with an open mind. In fact, certain social problems which look intractable *prima facie* would not remain so as a result of careful analysis, because by virtue of analysis one can explain the intricacies involved in the different factors and variables in the interaction process. Finally, by revealing such relationship that concrete solutions to such problems can be even hazardous. Therefore, concern for theoretical analysis and development of expertise in theoretical analysis would facilitate a better understanding and resolution of social problems.

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Political Science

A GENERAL agreement exists among social scientists that the world is objective and cognizable; but the differences start on the sources, form and methods of cognition, and the ways of attaining approximate truth about social reality. Further the social scientists have always recognized the need for a system of generalized knowledge for an explanation of different aspects of reality. When a social scientist confronts the complexity of social reality, he must find out logically defensible and empirically verifiable explanations. For this exercise, some social scientists have been always concerned with the need for a holistic theoretical framework.

It is a truism that the social sciences have come to India from the West. Scientific studies of a society are conducted in the framework of the observable social reality and the value-premises of the scholar. A critical social scientist, in the process of responding to social challenges, consciously and sometimes unconsciously, becomes ethnocentric. This ethnocentricity of the social scientist is partly the result of his limited capacity to observe the complexity of the social universe, and partly the result of his socialization in values, which have a particular societal reference and which he accepts as superior to the values of other societies. Leaving aside grand theorists like Karl Marx and Max Weber most social scientists, whether operating at the micro or at the middle-level of social reality, are in fact problem-solving agents of their societies. Thus unlike a physical scientist, the social scientist is conditioned by his social living, social milieu, and social challenges; he is involved in a search for answers, in terms of both public policies and societal values, for problems of his society. The theoretical framework and tools of analysis of the social scientist essentially represent the social epoch in which he is operating. The early Western social scientists were concerned, at the macro-level, with the problems and crises created by the Industrial Revolution, to which they hoped to find an answer.

Social scientists in the countries of the Third World have generally received Western social science as if it embodied "universal knowledge". This was perhaps inevitable given the unequal relationship between the Western social scientists and their counterparts in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere. In such a situation, the social scientist of the developing countries had two options: First, to idealize this Western reality as a superior category

of reality, and internalize its value-premises and transmit it to others; and, second, to delve deep into his reality, formulate concepts and theoretical frameworks, and also evolve tools of analysis for comprehending his social environment. He could have adopted a posture of "selectivity" in relation to imported knowledge. But the first option was exercised, and the scholars of the Third World established their "identity" with their Western colleagues; and the result was that the university elite (professional social scientists) in the Third World represent the ideas and ideals of the elite of the "mother country".

This impact of the West is writ large on Indian political science. In the pre-independence period, the teaching of political science in India was on the model of the British universities. Political theory as developed in the West and the European governmental systems formed the core of teaching. Modern political ideologies, which were all products of the challenges of the Industrial Revolution were also an important part of the curriculum. Important positions in political science departments were held by persons generally trained in the West. The emphasis on research was minimal; however, the researches and writings of the political scientists of the pre-independence period were concerned with important political and constitutional problems of the times. Indian constitutional experiments, like provincial dyarchy, provincial autonomy, problems of federalism, and the national movement, attracted the attention of teacher-researchers in political science. Following the British tradition of political science, these studies were descriptive and institutional in character.

After independence, the tasks of nation-building brought politics and governmental institutions into prominence. The ruling class knew that no basic change in India could take place without governmental intervention and initiative. Popular participation in the governance of the country, and the national goal of eradication of poverty created a situation wherein "government" became the critical and central variable of all important tasks of social change and economic development. Here one finds a paradoxical situation: never was government so important in India as it has been in the post-independence period, and yet the response of Indian political scientist in studying the challenging problems of politics and government has never before been so meagre. The expected strides in the studies and researches of political science after independence have not been taken.

Another development in the field of political science which needs serious attention is the penetration of American political science in India. The discipline is today pre-occupied with two American exercises in system-building: structural—functional theories and general systems theories of Talcott Parsons, Gabriel Almond, and David Easton. The Marxian theoretical framework, which is the other contender for the place of pride in the discipline and which seems more relevant to the understanding of the Indian political reality, is disabled and occupies a low position in the political science writing in India. It may be due to the training of the Indian political scientists in the Western universities. The current dialogue in political science is in terms of 'actors', 'roles', 'structure', 'equilibrium', 'sanctions and rewards', 'motivation', 'socialization', 'internalization', 'system capability', and 'system performances'. In methods of study, the emphasis is on quantification and measurement. The discussion centres round 'variables', 'hypothesis', 'measurement scales, ordinal, interval, nominal', and significance tests. American political scientists, particularly those who were writing

on political development, were inspired by the "functionalism" of Parsons (1972) but they did not accept that "politics is strictly instrumental; the political role is to organize people to act together in means-end relationships; identifying shared objectives, planning a route to them, organising actors so that they follow the best route to the agreed goal". David Easton (1953) rejected this "instrumentalist role of politics". This "functionalism" was the product of mass-consensual society where the emphasis was on stability, institutionalization and role differentiation. The pattern of behaviour was the focus of research in structures of polity. This model of mass-consensual society and stability was accepted by the Indian political scientists as the framework for the study of Indian politics. Samuel P. Huntington's emphasis on "institutionalization" as an important feature of political development (Huntington, 1968), has left a deep imprint on the Indian political science writings.

The question that arises is : Is the theoretical framework of "functionalism" adequate to understand Indian political reality ? Is "stability" useful as an analytical concept to interpret Indian politics ? Moreover, the American political scientists are still in search of a "general theory of politics" and hence their concerns are middle-level of micro-level studies of segments of polity. In the absence of an "over-arching" theory the studies would be confined to segments of reality and concentration on some structures and their pattern of behaviour would not explain the total reality.

Gabriel Almond, an important functionalist in politics, admits that the framework of analysis of political system as developed by him earlier was not in a given cross section of time. He writes (Almond and Powel, 1972): "It did not permit us to explore developmental patterns, to explain how political systems change and why they change".

Functionalists in politics, like their peers in sociology, cannot explain complex political reality with the help of assumptions on which their theoretical scheme is based.

Almond as a political scientists should have known that the major concern of political activity revolves around the unequal distribution of power in society. Private property, which is the most important social institution in capitalist societies, is the determining factor in Politics. Private property is the basic source of conflicts and contradictions in a capitalist society, and political struggles are launched to destroy political institutions which protect and defend property interests. Thus mass revolutionary movements which are directed against the system and which stand for basic and qualitative change in social and political institutions are not the concern of functional theorists in politics. Almond developed his model and recommended it for the study of the politics of the developing countries. The masses in these societies are struggling to resolve their basic social contradictions and Almond and other functionalists are suggesting "consensual model" for the study of such societies. The consensual model in politics emphasizes fundamental agreements in societies, while the Third World countries are confronting fundamental disagreements between the entrenched and the emerging classes. The empirical reality as it exists in these societies cannot be analyzed with the functional framework.

Further, a proper study of the politics of the Third World is not possible without understanding the role of imperialism and neo-colonialism. An arrested growth of these countries and survival of feudal and semi-feudal relations of productions with the full protection of colonial power were facts when these countries were liberated after World War II. The consequences of imperialism have no relevance for the functionalists like

Almond and Easton. After independence, interference of the colonial powers in the Third World has not ceased to exist. The political processes of these societies are influenced by the former colonial masters. Can a political scientist studying the Third World ignore the presence of neo-colonial activities of the former imperial powers? As Iskendero and Stepanov (Zhukov *et. al.*, 1970) observe :

The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America have seen how, in their own case, their newly achieved political independence and the termination of their colonial regimes have failed to protect them either from foreign exploitation or from systematic and often extremely rude foreign interference in their internal affairs. This exploitation and this interference, effected by methods which the imperialists endeavour to attune to present-day international conditions, form the content of modern colonialism or neo-colonialism.

A theory which does not take cognizance of this world reality cannot be valid for explaining political reality. The world is a process. It is in constant motion, change, transformation, and development. A theory which does not accept this view of the world can hardly understand the true nature of social reality. Hence the functional theorists in politics, with their consensual model and the view of present which is devoid of any picture of future, fail to provide empirically validated answers to what is happening in the Third World. According to Edward Shils (1971) the basic problem of "new states" is that they do not form a single civil society. "They are scarcely able thus far to produce a polity that can supply the personnel necessary to run a modern society. They lack the affirmative attitude towards rules, persons, and actions that is necessary for consensus". Accepting for a moment Shils's argument that the Third World countries "do not form a single civil society", the question is :

Were they allowed to have their natural development by the imperialist countries? The imperialists exploited all dissensions and social fragmentations in the colonies to perpetuate their rule. After struggles of independence were won, the imperialists came back again halted the natural process of development by imposing wars (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) or by conspiring against the legitimately established governments. Edward Shils is an important functionalist, and he presents a reality of the "old societies and new states" which is sheer distortion of what is happening in such societies. Thus the functionalists end up as defenders of bourgeoisie at home and of imperialism abroad.

One more illustration would prove that the functional framework is not helpful in understanding political and social reality in Third World Countries. Two important books have been written on Indian politics by W. H. Morris-Jones (1967) and by Rajni Kothari (1970)*. Morris-Jones is an unconscious functional theorist, while Rajni Kothari (1970 : 5) accepts that "we have, in our study, drawn freely on the tools

*A detailed review of these books is not attempted here as it is unnecessary. What is being shown is that under the impact of functionalism these two writers have not been able to appreciate fully the Indian reality.

provided by the functional school, of comparative analysis". Both these writers accept consensus as the key phenomenon of macro-political processes in India. The Indian reality as emerges from these books is revealing. For Morris-Jones (1967:52), the politics and society in India can be understood with the help of "traditional, saintly and modern idioms". In his understanding of "politics and society" landless peasant, rich rural peasant, organised working class, big bourgeoisie, and their role in politics has no relevance. A society where the absolute majority is living below the poverty line and is involved in a constant struggle with the entrenched classes, does not seem to provide any key to the understanding of Indian politics to Morris-Jones. And he chooses these idioms for understanding politics. However, he cannot ignore the masses and their role in politics. But when he comes to understand the masses, he ends up discovering caste as a fundamental reality of India. Morris-Jones (1967 : 65) writes :

Our understanding of much that is happening in Indian political life to-day is due to the social anthropologists. For they have to follow caste as a social institution wherever it may lead them, and it has led them firmly into politics. The central discovery is that politics is more important to castes and castes are more important in politics than ever before.

Morris-Jones is fascinated by the changing role of caste, but he is not interested in the struggle of peasants against the exploitative land regulations, and of the working class movements against the bourgeoisie. He is also not interested in analyzing the role of rich peasantry and the urban rich in the governance of the country through its political wing—the Congress party of India. For him trade unions and peasant movements are "non-party movements" and hence are not central to the functioning of Indian politics. Morris-Jones, (1967: 180-5). Further, he does not analyze the power wielded by organized business over the governmental decisions. But ends up with a bold statement. Morris-Jones (1967 : 183) writes : "Mutual irrigation may frequently occur between business and Congress —and—government, but on the whole each has such great need of" the others that the triangle is likely to remain in flourishing existence."

Morris-Jones is not interested in posing the basic question : Who wields power in India and for what purpose ? Why the fruits of development have gone more to the classes which were already affluent? Is this consensual politics of the centrist party able to resolve basic social contradictions or is merely helpful in postponing the confrontation? Similarly, Rajni Kothari is busy in discovering the changing character of caste in politics and recommends gradual change as panacea for the basic problems of the Indian society. He feels quite shy in using the word "imperialism" for the study of Indian politics.

The role of conflict in Indian society, and the nature of this conflict can be starting points of a meaningful debate in an Indian effort at theory-building in social science studies. Who forms the ruling class and for what purpose State authority is being used are important questions in the context of any polity? If this question is properly answered, other steps for understanding political phenomenon logically follow. Some of the questions on the agenda of political science research are as follows :

(1) Who forms the ruling class in India ?

- (2) What is the nature of conflict between the entrenched and the emerging classes ?
- (3) Is "conflict between tradition and modernity" a helpful category in understanding Indian political reality ?
- (4) Have the studies of caste in politics added significant knowledge about our political system ?
- (5) What is the relationship between State power and dominant economic groups in society ?
- (6) How is bureaucracy and other State instruments used in times of conflict between the property owners and the exploited social groups ?
- (7) How has adult franchise and politization of the masses and the growth of economic power of big business houses gone together during the last twenty-five years ? How have the benefits of development cornered by the richer section of society with the sanction of popular participation ?
- (8) What happens in a polity when the centres of political and economic power meet at the apex level ? The Indian chambers of commerce and industry are supporting each other in the exercise of power—economic and political—for the same goal, i.e., benefits to the entrenched classes. Is this the real meaning of "politics of consensus" being talked by the Indian "functionalists" ? In India the "center of political power is the Central Government". Whosoever occupies or can influence effectively this center would get the benefits of development. Hence the Big Business always rallies around the successful factional leader in the Congress Party.

These and various other questions need probing. And the political scientists in India have to accept the challenge of theory-building and evolving proper tools of research for the study of political reality. Both these tasks have to be performed simultaneously and only then would the discipline be able to grow.

The following facts need to be highlighted if political science is to be made capable of understanding Indian political reality.

The standard of the teaching, study, and research in political science is not very high as compared to the standards of other social sciences, notably economics and sociology; as compared to the standards existing in the foreign universities, political science in India is in a very poor state of affairs indeed. Neither from international standards, nor from national standards of other social science disciplines, do the political science studies in this country make any favourable impression. What are the causes of the poor standards of teaching and research in political science in India ? A few important factors may be mentioned here :

The only role which the Indian political scientist has played has been of transmitting, in a descriptive manner, information about the nature of foreign political institutions, and the philosophy and assumptions underlying these institutions. The books and writings prescribed for study are invariably written by foreign scholars in the perspective of their experiences and socio-political exposures. This subservience of the Indian scholar might have been an unavoidable situation in the pre-independence period. It was expected that after independence a better balance would be established between the contributions of the Indian and foreign scholars. But this only remains a pious wish. The Indian political scientist has not been able to develop any "autonomy"

of approach or thinking on the subject. Further, international communication in the field of scholarship has developed so much that the Indian scholar accepts blindly whatever is written abroad, and passes it on to the helpless student. Political scientist has never been a creator of knowledge; he has only been a party to the sin of exposing the Indian student to ideas which have not been tested or analyzed in the Indian context.

Another important factor responsible for the lack of growth of the "science of politics in India"* has been the absence of "science" in the teaching of politics. Teaching has been done without its content being based on rigorously collected and analyzed data and facts. How can one teach science without producing evidence? The only persons who prove science can be taught without evidence, are the Indian political scientists. The only proof of statements made in the classroom, is the authority (not of facts or evidence) of big names like Barker, Laski, Finer, Dahl, Almond. The Indian teacher still teaches (without corroborating with facts) that democracy does not succeed where illiteracy exists. Poverty and democracy do not go together. Two party system is a must for the survival of democracy. What is happening around in the real world is hardly related to the clichés used in the classroom. How can a science grow if there is no relationship between the statements and assertions made in the class and the experiences of the real world of the teacher and the student?

Further, a science must have the capacity to generalize and universalize on the basis of actual experience. For this, science has to be comparative as well as empirical. Indian economists and sociologists have realised this fact and during the last twenty-five years they have worked in this direction. With the help of vast data collected by them, it is now possible to generalize on important segments of economic and social behaviour in India. But the Indian political scientist has not stirred out of the classroom to examine the reality of political behaviour. He has perfected the "arm-chair" approach to teaching and research. His researches are confined to the library; and his output is limited to textbooks. A few empirical studies have been conducted by the Indian political scientists. But they have not influenced the mainstream of Indian political science. In majority of the Indian universities, political science departments do not insist on field-work or survey research for postgraduate students; and PhD students, can work on subjects of purely non-empirical character. This contempt for data and empiricism has resulted in a situation where *a priori* generalizations and subjective beliefs are exchanged in learned meetings of the political scientists. Indian political science has no prospects unless the teachers and researchers collect more data, visit the field of political market more often, interview the political actors, and analyze mass-elite relationship in its actual operation.

Because of its non-scientific approach, the Indian political scientist has not been exposed to the study of "methods" which are of vital importance in collecting, interpreting, co-relating, and analyzing information and facts about political life. In no university of India is a paper on "methods" compulsorily taught at the undergraduate or graduate level.† Any social science discipline must concern itself with substantive as well as methodological issues. A lot of efforts has to be put into the study of "methods" which help us in establishing relationship between two or more variables in explaining

*The scientific study of politics does not mean acceptance of inadequate theoretical framework like functionalism.

†The only exception is Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

political behaviour. Data are a must for any science. But data have to be collected; and for collecting data sophisticated methods have been developed in political science of which unfortunately the political scientist in India is blissfully ignorant. Further, data have to be collected in the context of a theoretical framework and hypothesis has to be constructed and tested. After the rigorous exercise has been done, theoretical generalizations have to be made which again become hypotheses for further study. In our universities, students are never taught even the meaning of hypothesis. If a political science PhD is asked what questions agitate his mind; what he is investigating into; what his hypotheses are; what his independent, dependent, and intervening variables are; and what scales of measurement he has developed for his study, he would not be able to answer satisfactorily any of these questions. Hence, refuge is taken to the researches into the old library literatures which should legitimately belong to history.

An attempt has been made here to focus attention on the factors responsible for the arrested growth of political science in India. The challenges both at micro- as well as macro-level of the Indian political scientist will have to respond. The processes which are at work are questioning the very assumptions underlying the institutional set up created by the Constitution Fathers. Further, formal political institutions are subject to informal pressures. The revolutionary implications of adult franchise have still to be reckoned with. Political institutions, the philosophy underlying them, and their actual operation need to be researched into. Political change in the country has upset all political parties. Analysis of party behaviour has to be given top priority in the Indian researches. Party organisation, leadership, finances, intra- and inter-party relationship, political recruitment of individuals, and involvement of organised and traditional social groups in party system of the country are important subjects for research in India. Only such kind of applied research, as suggested above, will enable Indian political scientists to build theoretical models and quantify results of research. These new directions of research, which are overdue and till now neglected, will enable us to redefine borrowed concepts of neutrality of civil service, incorruptibility of judges, etc. The tasks before the Indian political scientist are heavy but exciting.

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Psychology

THE HISTORY of any scientific discipline is a record of man's intellectual achievement. A review of the development of psychology during the past few decades is no exception either. Psychology in its development as a natural and social science has contributed considerably to our understanding of human behaviour in the different facets of life—economic, political, social, aesthetic, cultural and so on. The interdisciplinary approach taken by psychology has given it the necessary flexibility and freedom to analyse all aspects of human nature.

What makes psychology a social science is the involvement of its subject matter in the highly complex political, economic, cultural, and social processes and problems and the greater freedom it gives to the divergent views as to just how investigations should be conducted. As a branch of natural science even though psychology prefers the framework of exact sciences and strict experimental approach in its investigations, other methods which are mainly the tools of social scientists equally find a place in psychological methodology. As Chaplin (1968) puts it "the most striking difference, at least in psychology, between the psychologist as a natural scientist and the psychologist as a social scientist lies in the philosophical orientation and in the nature of the theoretical constructs which each employs". In general, the social psychologist fails to see the necessity of grounding psychology in physiology and is, therefore, not in favour of a reductionistic explanation. As a social scientist he unlike the psychologist as natural scientist, is more interested in the present behaviour and not very much concerned about tracing the antecedents of present behaviour. He is flexible in the deterministic nature of the science of psychology and he emphasizes the contemporary nature of causative factor in behaviour (Chaplin, 1969). The contributions from the psychologist who is a social scientist, goes to the field of personality, group dynamics, human relations, and other social and cultural processes than in experimental, physiological or theoretical learning.

In general, psychology's development shows two divergent approaches—the social science branch and the natural science branch. Even though they are divergent in their approach, they also supplement each other. Both of them have taken an interdisciplinary approach and hence we get the complex psychological theory of today.

When we examine the development of psychology in India Ebbinghaus' comment seems to be apt: "Psychology has a long past, but a short history" (Boring, 1956). This statement is of special significance in the development of psychology as a natural and social science in Indian universities. Even though we get a rich source of psychological knowledge in ancient Indian philosophical works, the scientific study of the subject matter of psychology started about sixty years ago when the first psychology department was established in Calcutta in 1915. After independence, even though psychology has considerably grown in bulk or quantity, and now more than thirty universities give programmes in psychology, an objective analysis of the situation does not give a very bright picture (University Grants Commission, 1968). The present educational system of India has not promoted the growth of psychology particularly in the planning of research programmes and academic courses. Psychological research has been going on in this country for quite a long time and the teaching of psychology for a much longer period. [The usual academic (teaching) programmes as well as research in Indian universities leave much to be desired and they seem to lack originality.] According to the report of the Review Committee on "Psychology in Indian Universities" (University Grants Commission, 1968) one is struck by the rather outdated syllabi both at the graduate and at the undergraduate levels. "Judging from the syllabi framed at the various universities, it becomes evident that very little attempt has so far been made to define the objectives of teaching psychology and spell out the principles or to justify the rationale behind the selection of certain papers and the omission of others". In the preparation of the syllabi the recent developments in the subject seems to be of no serious consequence, and in most cases personal preferences have weighed more. Naturally the courses offered are completely out of date and the students consequently lag far behind their counterparts in other parts of the world, particularly the developed countries.

The facilities in the psychology departments in many universities are often meagre. Ill-equipped laboratories and libraries without current journals or books are the main features of many departments; the situation gets worse in affiliated colleges where courses of psychology are offered. Overcrowded classrooms, poor student-teacher ratio, not to speak of the quality and training of the teacher himself, and so on further deteriorate the situation.

In addition to all these there is lack of homogeneity in the courses offered or the subjects taught in many centres. In some universities psychology is coupled with economics, history, and other social sciences, whereas in some universities it is placed with biology or even mathematics. (It is sad to note that in many universities they are not preparing the students for advanced studies or fruitful research particularly in the context of national goals and national requirements.)

When one takes a look at the research in psychology in Indian universities the picture is rather gloomy. (Research papers are in plenty, but when one examines the quality one cannot feel complacent.) The 'publish or perish' attitude seems to have promoted only quantity. Even though there are many psychological associations and they publish a large number of journals, they are so irregularly published that one feels elated when he sees an issue of a journal published according to schedule. Krishnan's review (1961) of psychological research in India during 1950-60 makes one believe that the psychologist has a strong research bent, because of the large number of papers published

in different fields during this period. But a close view of these publications gives the impression that they lack originality, scientific vigour, and precision. The sample sizes employed are small, statistical techniques inadequate and sometimes without much meaning and full of computational errors; because of all these it becomes impossible to draw valid generalizations based on these studies. Similarly a large number of doctoral theses are also submitted every year. Their general quality is no exception to the **general trend (International Union of Scientific Psychology, 1969.)**

The author was associated with the preparation of a review, sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, of research done in the various branches of psychology in India. It was very clear to everybody connected with this work that most researchers did not have any dominant interest in the area of specialization. Almost everybody was a jack of all trades and most of the work done was slipshod and superficial. Many had large numbers of papers to their credit, but of poor quality, lacking a sense of direction or purpose. It is sometimes said that many of the empirical studies reported in Indian journals, not only of psychology, but social sciences lack authenticity. It is the responsibility of the social scientists in India to eradicate such opinions about Indian work in other countries.

It is true that if we consider the number of social science research workers in India, their contributions to the development of social sciences is very meagre. Good books are rare and we have to depend upon Western books most of the time. The main reason for such a condition is lack of original research in the field.

Anyhow it is a good sign that recently we have become more and more frank, conscious of our limitations, and have started looking for what is wrong with social sciences in India. The present Seminar is itself an indication of the need felt by the leaders to promote the development of social sciences in India. In a sense we can say that social science is coming of age in India.

When we review the current research topics in psychology there are signs that psychologists are becoming serious about their science and social responsibility. The very recent research trends show promising signs and there are a number of research projects in many universities which can definitely contribute a lot to the understanding of human behaviour. In clinical psychology, the All India Institutes of Mental Health at Bangalore and Ranchi are doing very good work in the psychological aspects of mental disorders and therapeutic procedures. In industrial psychology also there are quite a number of promising programmes of research in the institutes of technologies; at ATIRA, Allahabad, SITRA, Coimbatore; and other institutions. Academic psychology also has become serious in a number of universities and there are periodic reviews of their syllabi and they try to present better programmes for students. Animal laboratories have been established recently in many universities and new avenues of research have opened up.

The current trends in modern psychology make a great demand on the research worker and we need considerable amount of research in different branches; and the Indian psychologists should take it as a challenge to do original work and contribute to their developing science. The work is required both in theoretical and in applied fields; and the old Indian psychological thought makes a rich resource for psychological investigations. Indian philosophical psychology is a perennial source of hypotheses in more than one field of empirical psychology and it will not be difficult to create a school of psychology based on Indian philosophical thought, after careful empirical

studies based on these hypotheses. In fact, there have already been some attempts to develop an Indian psychology though it has not caught the imagination of the empirically-oriented psychologists in India. Westerners seem to be more interested in studying the psychotherapeutic value of the *Gita*, "Buddhism", and 'Yoga Meditation and Personality'. Recently some Indian psychologists have taken an interest in studying these aspects of Indian psychology. There is no doubt that such fields are greatly useful to do original research and the results will have far reaching implications. There is a wealth of psychological thought in Indian philosophy and many Western psychoanalysts, psychotherapists and parapsychologists are finding a lot of material for empirical investigation, and they are doing excellent work based on this. The best example is parapsychology where empiricism goes hand in hand with philosophical speculation, religion, and mysticism. Many parapsychologists of the West are surprised to find that Indian psychologists are not taking any interest in this field in spite of the fact that India has a background in mysticism and a reputation for spontaneous Psi-phenomena.

It may sound unfashionable and out of tune with the spirit of the day when one voices a plea for encouraging theoretically oriented research in psychology, especially when one tries to link it with ancient Indian thought. In psychology there is a vast field which needs exploration. Almost all the Indian psychological concepts are yet to be explored thoroughly and there is no doubt that research in these fields will be highly useful in the social and economic development of the country. For this, research programmes with a strong theoretical bent are essential in Indian psychology.

It is not possible to classify every research as either theoretical or applied. Most of these fall in the middle category. While generally applied research follows from theory, sometimes findings of applied research can have theoretical implications and this is especially true in the case of psychology. Whenever the question of sponsoring theoretical versus applied schemes arise, one would vote for the theoretical, other things being equal. Applied research, to be meaningful, should have its bases on some substantial theory. Building a science as applied research is building a house without a foundation. Applied research is easy and attracts public attention. Theoretical research of the hypothetic-deductive variety requires a greater amount of creative thought, imagination, originality as well as knowledge in the field. Even though there is some difference of opinion among psychologists, regarding the role of theory construction in psychology, some of them have strong antitheoretical bias, however even the work of these people show **theoretically oriented fundamental research**.

When we try to evaluate the nature of psychological research in India we realize that there is a strong tendency on the part of many psychologists to go in for applied research. The reason may be the lack of facilities to do fundamental research, but that is no excuse and it would appear as if fundamental research is ignored. Should organisations like the University Grants Commission and the ICSSR support and finance this tendency to go in for applied research? It would be indeed a short sighted policy on our part to encourage applied research at the expense of basic fundamental **theoretical research**.

Another important point to be noted when one talks about research in social sciences is the inadequate knowledge of **research methodology on the part of the workers** as is evident from many research reports. Methodologically perfect work can only be considered to be of any scientific value.

The author (George, 1970) has tried to name some important areas of research to which psychologists in India should pay attention. Certain specific suggestions were made and some areas were named (George, 1972). These areas relate to current national interest in which social scientists are involved. To every psychologist it is clear from the Western journals and books that the advances in psychology are amazingly fast and a number of new areas are emerging. This is actually reflected in the International Congress in Psychology held in Moscow in 1966.

Some current areas of research are suggested and the Indian psychologists should try to concentrate on these areas among other things.

Learning Theory and Psychopathology. An entirely new approach has been taken by many Western psychologists regarding the problems of abnormal behaviour. The recent studies by Miller seems to be making revolutionary changes in our knowledge of mental diseases. The experimental approach to psychopathology based on modern learning theory seems to be quite interesting. If we explore further under this theoretical framework, Indian psychologists can make substantial contributions in the causative factors of schizophrenia, mental retardation, neurotic behaviour in general, and so on. The psychologists working in mental hospitals and clinics should adopt this approach. This field promises a new era in the treatment of mental diseases. The influence of learning theories has become so dominant, that the modern-clinical psychologists even reject the old medical classification of mental diseases and the medical model to explain abnormal behaviour. An absolutely new approach is taken towards the explanation of mental aberration and hence we get the new psychological classification of today. The work of Skinner, Eysenck, Hall, and many others have influenced this current trend in psychopathology (Yates, 1970). If research in these fields becomes fruitful, psychology can be put on a better footing and its growth would be on a parallel with medical sciences.

Mental Health and Psychotherapy. It is rather unfortunate that we have no reliable data regarding the incidence of mental diseases in this country. We still have to depend upon the incidence reported in Western countries for various purposes of comparison. It is quite natural to have difference in the incidence of mental disorders from culture to culture. The Indian psychologists should take serious note of this problem. The attitudes and approaches to mental diseases among the general public is another interesting field of research. The cultural factors which contribute to mental diseases and aberrations need detailed study. Ancient Indian medicine and the efficacy of the same in the treatment of mental symptoms is again an allied area which needs attention. The yoga practice and its psychotherapeutic value is yet another field of exploration. It can be compared with behaviour therapy and the usefulness of yoga as an autonomic controlling activity can be studied. The comparative effects of yoga practice, and behaviour therapeutic procedures in psychoneurotic behaviour are to be assessed (George, 1970).

Alcoholism and Drug Addiction. The problem of drug addiction and alcoholism is alarmingly increasing in the world over, especially among the youth. Our own country is no exception in this regard. More and more young people are becoming victims to

this habit. To study the actual dynamics of drug addiction and alcoholism, the psychological analysis of personality factors is more important than the many other social or cultural factors. Why a particular type of people has been more prone to the habit than the other types is of great significance. Studies reported by Eysenck, Thomson and Schuster (Eysenck, 1970; Thomson and Schuster, 1968) throw considerable light on this problem. The personality factors of the alcoholics and addicts in India have to be studied in detail and it is certain that many useful suggestions for improving their conditions will come out of it. The personality factors, the social factors, and many other socio-psychological aspects of this problem demand immediate attention and careful study so that preventive medicine can be planned.

Problems of Youth and Exceptional Children. Another field which demands immediate attention from the psychologists is the problem of youth and exceptional children. The psychological, sociological and educational problems of these groups need genuine research on the part of psychologists and serious study in these areas will bring about fruitful results, which can solve many problems in this area. Some studies are conducted in this direction in the Department of Psychology, Kerala University, which has opened a new insight into their problems. Many new hypotheses are suggested and a detailed investigation is required to tackle the problems. Studies into the causes and remedies of student unrest are also needed. The effect of introducing fine arts, sports, work experiences, religious education, civics, character training, and so on in the curriculum on unrest should be experimentally tried out (George, 1970).

Crime and Delinquency. The increase in the rate of crime and juvenile delinquency is another sphere which needs studies by psychologists. It is a fertile field of psychological investigation and very relevant to national interest. Studies regarding the personality aspects of crime have to be taken up. Studies in the Western countries have opened new fields and based on their theoretical formulations experimental studies can be conducted in India. Factors leading to crime, especially the psychological and social aspects, need urgent attention from social scientists. Deficiency in social relationship and the rate of crime may suggest many new openings in this field (Eysenck, 1963; 1970). Suicide is another important area to be covered. So far few or no studies are conducted on this important social phenomenon in India. The psychology of suicide needs detailed researches in India, and the number of studies in the West on suicide can serve as examples and models for further investigations.

Social Psychological Problems. Social problems, fortunately, are a favourite field of research in India. A majority of the studies reported fall in the social aspects of behaviour. Even then there are a number of areas where studies are demanded. Many of these problems are of an interdisciplinary nature. Citing a few, the population problems need special attention (George, 1973). Study of family size norms held by different sectors in the population is urgently needed, so that communication methods can be suitably devised and directed. Family planning and the psychological aspects of birth control are another social-psychological territory, where researches can be conducted. In a rapidly changing society, the psychologist should be extremely vigilant

to explore the different aspects of the individual in relation to his social environment. National character is yet another area to be assessed.

Industrial Relations. Industrial relations provide a rich source for psychologists to investigate and many of the applied research work done in India is in industrial psychology. Still there are a lot of problems which need investigation. Labour relations and political involvement, productivity and personality, accident, adjustment problems, human engineering, etc., provide very good fields. Psychologists get better facilities in this area than in many other fields of psychology. Serious researches in industrial relations can revolutionize our industrial front and suggest many remedies to the problems in modern industry.

Motivational Behaviour. The problem of character is one of the most difficult problems for the researcher. We often hear that our national character is represented, by large scale corruption, laziness, plain unwillingness, lethargy, and so on. This attitude is developed in all spheres of life. The excellent work done on achievement motivation by McClelland and others in the U.S.A. and in Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh) in this country suggests many remedies to the motivational problems of our people. McClelland's methods of inducing achievement motivation can be properly extended to our people also, if the Indian psychologists take a serious note of it. If psychologists can contribute significantly to the economic and social development of the country through studies on motivational behaviour, then the psychologist's role as a social scientist is justified, and they can be proud of their role in the developmental programmes.

Mathematical Psychology. One recent trend in modern psychology is quantification of psychological data and giving mathematical models to psychological processes. The maturity of any science to some extent is measured in terms of the mathematics it employs in treating the subject matter. Mathematical models are precise and easily testable in an objective way. In the psychology of learning, memory, group dynamics, and so on, mathematical models are introduced and Indian psychologists should contribute their share in the field. As indicated earlier theoretical research is more important and mathematical psychology is a challenging field for theory construction in psychology. Research in the field of information theory, cybernetics, and stochastic process, can be extended to many more areas in psychology.

Operant conditioning. One of the outstanding achievements of modern psychology is in the field of behaviour modification based on operant conditioning. The principles of operant conditioning give an ample source for research in almost all the psychological processes. It has special implication in educational field and child rearing practices (George, 1973). Research programmes with special reference to Indian educational problems are necessary in the field of programmed learning, and educational psychologists should try and study experimentally the effect of programmed learning in India. The psychologists can equally apply these techniques to mental hospitals also. This requires additional facilities too.

Research Fields Emphasizing Interdisciplinary Approach. There are a number of new fields where psychologists collaborate with biochemists, physiologists, sociologists, anthropologists to do explorations in some aspects of behaviour. Psychopharmacology is an excellent example, emphasizing the interdisciplinary approach. There are ample sources in ancient Indian literature showing the relationship between drugs and personality. There are quite a few drugs mentioned in the ayurvedic system, which are suspected to be having hallucinogenic properties or tranquilizing effects. The psychologists in India can explore this field with the help of pharmacologists. The modern knowledge of behaviour pathology depends a lot on these pharmacological agents. The psychochemistry behind many of the mental aberrations can reveal a lot about the human mind. Some of the recent advancements in the field connecting learning principles and effect of drugs demands considerable attention from psychologists. The role of "stimulant drugs" in accelerating the learning process is still under investigation (Eysenck, 1963). Under the framework of coordinating considerable work has been going on in this field. The Indian psychologist can apply these principles into other fields like verbal learning etc. Personality factors can also be studied under the new field of psychopharmacology. Eysenck's suggestions (Eysenck, 1963) can be seriously taken by psychologists in this regard. Serious studies by psychologists with the help of neurologists and biochemists can contribute significantly to this field.

Similarly behaviour genetics is another promising field which allows a great deal of interdisciplinary research programmes. The inherited and acquired characteristics are of great interest to modern psychology, and behaviour genetics can supplement knowledge in some of the problem areas in psychology.

A lot of advancement has taken place in psycho-linguistics, but it remains somewhat unknown in many Indian universities. Functional analysis of verbal behaviour, conditioning and language, acquisition of the language, etc., are useful fields of research. Some studies are recommended in George Miller's direction also. Sufficient attention has not been given to psycho-linguistics in India. A venture in this field will be highly rewarding.

The physiological aspects of behaviour is where little or no research is done in India. Physiological-psychology, neurophysiology, and neuropsychology are almost untouched areas. In developed countries these fields are a favourite research area, and recently many a physiological correlates of psychological behaviour has been investigated. It looks quite promising too. The physiological and biochemical basis of memory, the biochemistry during the learning process in nerve cells, and so on are achievements of modern physiological-psychology and neuropsychology. The combined efforts by psychologists, biochemists, and neurologists have given us considerable insight about the physiology of learning, especially the biochemical changes taking place in DNA and RNA. The role of a particular protein synthesis during the biochemical coding of the learning process is of great significance to India, where there is a "protein starvation". The Indian psychologists should seriously take up the field and do serious research with the help of biochemists. The role of acetyl choline and cholinesterase in memory is still under preliminary investigation (George, 1972). The Indian psychologists in collaboration with other scientists, can definitely contribute to the field considerably and if they prove to be successful in finding out the biochemical code behind learning, this will have far-reaching implications. The recent

studies in USA by Delgado makes an excellent model for such studies in India (Chaplin *et. al.* 1968)

One cannot blame the social scientist alone in being relatively unproductive in India. Financial resources are limited and organisations encouraging research are almost few in this part of the world. The universities till very recently were lacking a research orientation. In this context, organisations like the ICSSR, can do a lot in the promotion of research in social sciences in India. It is a matter of great gratification to see that some concrete steps are taken by the ICSSR in this regard.

The ICSSR should make it a regular programme to survey periodically the needs and problems of social scientists in India, and suggest suitable solutions to remedy the situation. It can seek ways to change the bureaucratization in educational institutions, which is but a remnant of the British rule. Power is sometime regarded as antithetical to scholarship. The power thrust into the hands of senior and experienced scientists makes them temperamentally unacademic, and at a time when they can make substantial contributions to the subjects, their valuable time is lost in administrative work.

Opinion surveys regarding the ways and means to encourage original research should be conducted on research scholars as well as on scientists. Their recommendations should be taken seriously and the ICSSR should take steps to see that they are implemented. Bernard Shaw said that those who are good for nothing teach. In India those who are good for nothing, and cannot get a teaching assignment, "do research". To be frank, even some of the governmental agencies think that research is a futile job and research spirit is something which should be discouraged ! The ICSSR should find out ways to see that the right kind of people are engaged to do research, by offering facilities and financial support.

Ignorance of the research methods on the part of the researchers is evident from many research reports. The ICSSR should intensify its effort to impart knowledge of research methodology to old as well as young research scholars. The summer institutes should be made more interesting and more people should be brought into the programme.

The ICSSR should sponsor only research schemes which are methodologically sound, theoretically significant, and practically useful. A single investigation, well-planned and executed, can yield more information than a hundred investigations without proper controls. In fact careless investigations can often give misleading conclusions.

The ICSSR should publish or encourage publishing journals which should come at scheduled time. It should encourage publication of the PhD theses, or at least abstracts of the theses, submitted to different universities. It should prepare grounds for mutual communications between research workers working in different fields. This will definitely avoid duplication in research themes which is a main feature of Indian research.

It is suggested that the ICSSR should encourage writing of original books in different subjects, by authorities in the field. This needs a lot of facilities and every kind of encouragement. We need a number of text books and reference books with special reference to Indian conditions.

Finally there is a complaint that the Government is not taking seriously the findings of social sciences research in framing the policies. There is some truth in this complaint. But it may be said in this context that when we build a science on firm foundations,

we will have more confidence about our findings, conclusions, and judgements. Then the Government will take things seriously. The ICSSR can also influence the Government in this regard.

When we take a general view the conditions seem to be progressing. Hard work and original research will bring a high status to the science of psychology in India. The Indian psychologists should take it as a challenge and devote themselves to the development of their science and make an earnest effort to contribute to the national goal and national efforts particularly of development.

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Roots of Tension in Academia*

INFORMAL participant observation in the Indian academic world over a stretch of years reveals certain puzzles, and this essay attempts a preliminary analysis of some of these. One of the puzzles concerns the wide gap between the ideals of academic behaviour—evident both in formal enunciation and in critical comments concerning others—and the individual performances. The *average* level of performance—both qualitative and quantitative—is low, certainly far below what the intellectual capacities demonstrated in the occasional flashes of peak performance would lead one to expect. One wonders why, until one hears reports about—and observes—long sessions of gossip about colleagues over tea and coffee, and the attempts to climb the academic ladder through manipulation—paying homage to the powerful, organising cliques, and undercutting rivals who, to be sure, are often similarly engaged.¹ As a social anthropologist, predictably, I should say that these diverse elements of the academic culture are interdependent and functionally integrated: A recent commentator has said that our academic system exists only to meet certain low level needs of the larger society:

The latter demands little of the former—except mass production of degree holders, regardless of quality. Subject only to quantitative demands, the academic system does not have to respond to any qualitative controls—external or internal. It gets by nicely with *low quality over-production* both of scholars and of their works. (Seminarist, 1971 : 28, emphasis his).

This (1) low performance level entails (2) the need to manipulate for the sake of upward mobility, which in turn is associated with (3) fears of others' manipulation and, in a manner familiar to students of witchcraft accusations, leads to ascriptions of widespread hostility—some of them realistic.

In the social dimension of our academic life, then, there are many tensions. These are not the intellectual tensions which necessarily underlie creative effort. Our passions

*Stimulating criticism of earlier drafts by Lachman Khubchandani and T. N. Madan has helped me expand and, hopefully, improve this paper.

are drained not in creative debate—that one seldom encounters—but in unproductive gossip and politicking. What are the ways out of this situation?

The problem, of course, is subject to endemic discussion. Here I shall consider the proposals from only two scholars, Edward Shils and Yogendra Singh, whose positions happen to be readily available to me. Shils (1967) traces a large part of our slackness to the fact that we continue to hold Western scholars and their universities as our models for intellectual activity, which is debilitating: we need to develop our own centres of creative effort where, assembled face to face, creative minds would stimulate each other, provide proximate models for other universities, and thus improve striving and achievement overall. For this he proposed the establishment of a few *major universities*, the leaders, the pace-setters for the Indian academia.

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is presumably a response to this proposal. While JNU has yet to become the lodestar of our academic life, it is perhaps premature to write it off, as some are inclined to do (for example, Kothari, 1972:22). In any case, JNU can have only one centre for any discipline, while a national stratum of quality must be spread over a minimum of three or four departments in any one discipline: you need that many in order to develop a minimum variety of perspectives, to send one department's MAs to another for PhDs, to find external examiners, to prevent faculty inbreeding, and to have productive places to move to when interpersonal relations sour in one department (as they will, off and on). All this requires not only a concentration of funds in particular places but also collegial consensus concerning the potentials of particular departments and a willingness to move into those which are promising.

Yogendra Singh's argument (1972 : 217) derives from scalar and factor analysis of questionnaire data from the faculty at the University of Rajasthan. I am not competent to evaluate his procedure, but let us consider his conclusions :

The contemporary university finances and administrative practice make for high structural closure and low promotion chances, blocking the existential chances of most teachers. This is illustrated, for example, in the career paths in our universities : most academic departments have 1 Professor for 3-4 Readers and 15-20 Lecturers. Given limited prospects for rewards, aspirations are stabilized at lower levels, with associated levels of academic productivity. Therefore, to modernize the academic role structures further, we require elasticity in respect of educational inputs and in the system of promotions, attending both to the objective conditions in universities and to the teachers' own motivational structure and professional self-image.

Elsewhere in the same volume he is reported as arguing that :

...the present pyramidal structure of the discipline [of sociology] made for high unproductive tensions within it; these could be alleviated if the structure were cubical, with a flatter top represented in a much higher percentage of professorships... (p. 261).

The proposal for more professorships has two aspects. Firstly, it would raise the average income of the university teachers. While personally I would be happy to have

more money to spend, academic salaries are already well up in the top 5 per cent of our national income distribution (Dandekar and Rath, 1971), and it seems to me that, in a national perspective, the allocation of more resources for us has lower priority than for those below the poverty line. And in allocating further resources to academia, the stress should be not on individual salaries but on corporate consumption—the libraries, the lecture halls, departmental equipment, and the like. Secondly, it would reduce the status inequalities (and the associated authoritarianism) characteristic of our universities. Such an outcome is desired by other observers of the contemporary scene also (Sinha, 1974; Saberwal, 1972) but, for a link between more professorships and egalitarianism, there is no conclusive support either in logic or in experience. The problem is one of motivations, of norms, of culture, and minor structural change can have only partial influence on these. If we wish to attack our inordinate preoccupation with status, it might be helpful to make the chairmanship of a department open to readers as well as professors, perhaps on an elective basis, although this might make only for heightened, barren politicking unless the academic purpose were felt more urgently all round.²

The elements discussed above do contribute to our malaise, in howsoever indeterminate a measure, but I proceed now to argue the great importance of the parochialism-cosmopolitanism factor for generating unproductive tensions. Some years ago Lloyd Fallers (1961) contrasted the “peasantry” in Asia with the cultivators in sub-Saharan Africa along the following lines: in the absence of writing, the gap between the African cultivator’s subculture and that of his ruling groups—as in the case of the Uganda—was small; and, given a chance, a boy, born to a cultivator, could learn what was necessary for rising in the king’s court in a short span of time. This made for high rates of social and political mobility in contrast to the limited possibilities in societies wherein the gap between the Great and the Little Traditions is very much greater: in the latter, to rise in the social and political order a peasant’s son would have to learn a very great deal, probably more than what the prevailing arrangements would permit him to learn within his life time.³

It is fair to draw a parallel here with the contemporary academic scene in India. We notice a great gap between, shall we say, the Great Tradition practised by the most competent among those who have studied at Canberra, Cambridge, or Chicago—the cosmopolitans—and the Little Traditions practised by those who may have gone from regional language schools to lowly universities within India, which need not be identified, perhaps getting a PhD from one or another: these would tend to be the parochials. (Needless to say, these are ideal types: real persons would lie along a continuum between them.) The great tension between the cosmopolitans and the parochials is expressed in continual sniping along a series of interfaces; I shall consider these now.

The international/national interface is one of these. The cosmopolitan-international stands for the universality of scholarship, for freedom of enquiry, and for international standards; he bemoans the wretchedness of Indian universities and waves a stack of reprints in Western journals as evidence of his true worth. The nationalist rejects these criteria: scholarship must have social relevance, its findings must be addressed to our countrymen, and one must not use “internationalism” as an excuse for neglecting

one's students in India, going abroad on every junket coming one's way. Besides, the internationalists are alleged—with varying measures of seriousness—to be agents of CIA and the like, intent on selling India to their true masters.

But the nationalist located in metropolitan centres has to cope with colleagues in the provincial universities. The academic jagirdar in Delhi has to attend meetings of a hundred committees not only in his university but also in the University Grants Commission, the National Council of Educational Research and Training, the Indian Council of Historical Research, Ministry of Education, and assorted Boards of Studies, selection committees, and so forth. He has to speak on the radio, appear on television, and sit on countless panels. If he is a member of the Lok Sabha, his exertions multiply and he pines away for professional reading and other academic work, for he has no free time. The ungrateful provincial man does not appreciate these monumental sacrifices in the larger cause: he sees in them, rather, an insatiable hunger for power, a dereliction of academic duties, and occasionally a venal drive for collection of multiple travel allowances, and the like.

Then there is the question of language: which is it more honourable to teach and write in, English the window on the world, the language of excellence, the only All-India language? Or one of the regional languages, the mother-tongue, the language of the masses?

Given the disparate criteria of evaluation, linked substantially to the parochial-cosmopolitan dimension, the Indian academic communities in various disciplines have failed to evolve academic standards which would apply across the board in a predictable manner.⁴ With such norms lacking, it is natural for individuals to try to reduce the uncertainties for themselves in other ways, both through intra-academic factional alignments (De 1971 and other essays there) and through linkages with extra-academic loci of power. The search for such linkages occurs all along the cosmopolitan-parochial continuum, but in different directions: the parochials' links are with politicians within their regions, and the universities there are often exclusive preserves; those who do not speak the region's language need not try. The needs for distributive justice and regional representation promise them footholds in the national councils too. The cosmopolitans' links tend to be international, with control over patronage flowing through international conduits, and they share places in national level committees, and seminars, with the parochials and the nationals.

In this milieu, the academic's historic task of forthright intellectual appraisal, in defiance, if need be, of the men of power, is lost. To be willing and able to engage in impression management, often using the mass media, aligned with other non-academic sources of power, usually carries the day in particular contexts with mere academic competence. But there is another consequence of very great importance. Our academic programmes even at the highest levels do not seek to cultivate the capacities for critical appraisal among the scholars-in-the-making:⁵ despite precepts to the contrary, they learn the rewards of deferring to the Great and the costs of exercising independent, critical judgment. Given the persisting issues of parochialism-cosmopolitanism and the derivative issues of power and competence, it is not surprising that perennial, irresolvable, and debilitating tensions should forever bedevil our academic discourse.

LET me now suggest some directions to cope with this chronic situation. First, I suggest that in our universities we must give urgent attention to the organization of departmental seminars. The cut and thrust of face-to-face argument is one of the most effective mechanisms for conveying the style of academic appraisal to the next generation; yet, sad to note, it is possible to get a PhD in India without ever *attending* a seminar, let alone presenting a paper at one! Not many among such PhDs are likely to have the reference points one needs for separating grain from chaff, intellectual worth from status.

Given modest funds—say the average cost of a visiting participant at a national seminar—a university department should be able to bring in eight to ten outsiders every year to appear before the departmental seminar. Some of these would be scholars from distant places, in the vicinity on other business. (Full control over one common language, by every member of the audience as well as the speaker, is not essential: I have participated in seminar discussions employing Hindi, Urdu and English, whose level was similar to that of unilingual sessions.) Such exposure to a broad range of scholarship would do much more, for many more individuals, than the high cost air-conditioned seminars to which some of us are so addicted. I should add here that the establishment of a creative seminar requires funds much less than it needs the faculty's determination that such a seminar, using available resources, has a central place in its essential tasks.

The second response to the current situation has to deal with our relations with the "government"—or, more specifically, with politicians, administrators, and planners, and with memberships in myriad committees of the government and its "autonomous" institutions. Let me distinguish here between two kinds of roles: those of the *managers*—in politics, journalism, planning and the public domain at large which require essentially the skills of the generalist; and those of the *academics*, who do—or ought to—specialize in particular themes and problem areas, their "general" skills being those of creative and critical thought.

Now a bad habit that India's managers have acquired is that of telling the academic continually that he does not offer any solutions for the country's problems. Unfortunately, we have taken this complaint seriously though it is rooted in the managers' failure to understand the necessary limits of a *capable* academic⁶. This kind of animal should have mastered certain kinds of information, certain ways of asking questions, certain ways of finding and presenting the answers, etc. He has to be valued for his *limited* excellences. It is true that societal problems are global, wide-ranging. I suggest that the best kind—indeed the only productive kind—of relationship between managers and academics is one in which the managers draw upon diverse academics' limited excellences and produce their own global responses to the global problems. When, instead, the academic is tempted into producing the global responses, he may not make sense; his control over his limited excellence is likely to begin to slip too and, more critical, the quality of instruction in his base department deteriorates, the students who come to study under him get short-changed, and the prospects of sustaining a self-regenerative intellectual system decline. With the academic system failing to generate any clan, the effort to find "solutions" will turn out to have been shortsighted⁷ (Madan, 1972).

The foregoing does not imply that the academics ought to stay in their ivory towers. I concur with the proposal, emerging from diverse sources (Shukla, 1973; Adiseshiah, 1973; and others), that the educational system should be work-centred; but this would be work at the local level, involving both the teachers and the students in the local community or the region, and work would be a learning situation. This is quite different from the value that some academic overlords attach today to a summon from the minister for planning, using it for whatever it will yield in terms of personal status.

The link between education and work is fairly clear in institutions such as those of medicine, engineering, agriculture, and management. There is, besides, a long-forgotten experience of "work" in lieu of university examinations: in 1947, on the eve of the partition, university examinations were thoroughly disrupted in the Punjab, and a very large number of students received degrees on the basis not of university examination but of "social work" in the refugee camps. I doubt, however, that our educationists or other social scientists utilized this "natural experiment" to determine what consequences such work involvement had for the students' self-images and subsequent career choices and career paths.

What happened in 1947, in any case, cannot be repeated. What kind of work, then, can we design for the millions of boys and girls in the high schools and in the arts and science colleges? There appears to be, at this juncture, one fairly simple kind of work which, if adopted widely, could grow into a mass movement. I think of a drive for adult literacy which could, given a national thrust, effectively employ the customary skills of these boys and girls. Such involvement would build their self-confidence and familiarize them with the magnitude of our poverty. It could lead them into a heightened political awareness and lay the social base for a sustained, continuing programme for adult education. Social science research, ranging from processes of learning to structures of social organizations, would bear on such a movement. Insofar as it mobilizes the students, their teachers, and university faculties, it would also serve to stretch the range of their concerns and thus to dissolve the many zero-sum games of today's academic politics (Seminarist, 1971).

Finally, I think it is clear that we must do something about the parochial-cosmopolitan spread. A large part of the problem is an inescapable consequence of the history of our westernization; but the erstwhile open doors policy permitting westerners to do research in India at will and allowing our students to go abroad more or less at will has aggravated the situation: the latter come overwhelmingly from the urban, high income, English-medium-educated category, and when they become the Westward-looking cosmopolitan academics, their distance—not only intellectual but also social—from the parochials becomes formidable. A structural change, I submit, is necessary, so that the rewards for looking inwards will increase and those for looking Westwards will decline. Given such a shift, the intensity of flow of communications between our parochial and cosmopolitan ends will grow and, if we so strive, shared standards and norms will emerge.

Within the past decade the national community has begun to provide the social sciences with resources adequate for a vigorous academic community. This is evident in the investments made in and through the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Indian Council of Social Science Research, the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and the numerous centres of social research started in Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Trivandrum, Ahmedabad, and elsewhere. What would have been a cause for celebration, however, becomes a source of despair when one looks at the situation more closely. The root of the problem lies in the shackles which bind our universities and which include, indeed, the grip of academic politicking on them. Some university departments have, indeed, tried hard to maintain their standards, but one cannot easily think of any which, having once declined, were able to recoup stature : declining standards are a one way process. Since departments stuffed with incompetence are not anxious to recruit creative scholars, there is a secular trend forcing talent out of the universities.

On the premise that the problems arise in the settled ways of the older universities, the last two decades have seen the rise of several new universities, promising to break with the past and blaze new trails. By now most of these have also settled into the ways of the older universities. Whether or not the story will be repeated at JNU is unclear yet. In any case, new universities are expensive to build, for these have to provide not only for the scholars but also for the students. It is much cheaper, then, to build research centres for scholars only and, therefore, in our emergent academic systems, these centres are essentially refugee camps for talent forced out of the universities. University work will, thus, continue to decline and, in due course, the supply of talent even for the research centres will vanish unless, of course, we continue forever to depend on the West for this resource.

It is clear, then, that the situation allows us no escape from the imperative of doing whatever must be done to restore the intellectual primacy of the universities in our academic system. It is only by coping with this central task that we can hope to restore balance to our academic endeavour and thus to allow a new normative order, adequate to our circumstances, to become institutionalized.

NOTES

1. I do not wish to suggest that the Indian academic's politicking is unique. Evidence of similar behaviour in, for example, British campuses comes in the allusions of the sociologist, F.G. Bailey (1969: xiv, 6, 129-30), and in an account by the novelist C.P. Snow (1960). My point is that in India the balance between academic endeavour and politicking is, rather too often, tilted heavily in the latter direction.
2. It might also be argued that status inequality cannot be levelled in the academic world so long as the wider society remains so blatantly inegalitarian.
3. Along a parallel line of thought, Suresh Shukla (1974) has drawn some interesting inferences for an educational policy appropriate to a socialist transformation.
4. This failure in the academic realm is of a piece with the fact that the norms appropriate to a rational-legal order, necessary for an industrializing society, have not taken hold in Indian society at large. I expect to consider this on a later occasion; but see for a provocative viewpoint, Joshi (1974).
5. Given this, Amlan Datta's proposal (1971) for a journal devoted exclusively to book reviews in the social sciences may not bear fruit: the poor quality of the reviews in many of our professional journals suggests that we are simply not producing, in adequate numbers, scholars whose critical balance would be such as to make them good reviewers of books.

6. Let pass the fact that we do not wish to resist the lures of Yojana Bhavan, Shastri Bhavan, or the South Block.
7. This argument is *a priori*. To reach empirically grounded judgments on the optimum relations between the academics and the managers, it would be useful to have personal accounts of particular relationships in this realm. For examples of such accounts in a rather different milieu, see Beteille and Madan 1974.

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Summing Up

General Resume

A SEMINAR on Social Sciences and Social Realities was held at Simla from 7 to 13 October, 1972 under the joint auspices of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study and the Indian Council for Social Science Research. It was attended by about forty scholars representing the following social science disciplines: Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Law and Jurisprudence, History, Economics, Management and Philosophy. Papers on various aspects of social science in relation to social reality had been prepared for the Seminar and they were taken as read. Discussions were organised around five major themes. These were : (i) social science and changing society : the role of social scientists in developing countries; (ii) social science and national development; (iii) organization and management of social science research: the claims of pure and applied research; (iv) the development of social sciences in India : an overview; (v) theory building in the social sciences.

The chairman for each of these five sessions was: T. N. Madan, M. N. Srinivas, Kamla Chowdhry, Y. B. Damle and S. Anandalakshmi. Each chairman started the session by analysing the different dimensions of the theme for the day and indicated the perspective that might be adopted for the discussions. Each chairman also spoke on his or her own standpoint in relation to the theme of the Seminar. The participants were then invited to make general contributions to the discussion and, more specifically, to relate to the theme of the day his or her own paper prepared for the Seminar.

The convening of the Seminar in five sessions, each devoted to a theme, without tying the discussion to specific papers, was done in the hope of allowing as much scope for the discussion of subjects of general importance as possible. Consequently, there was discernible throughout the Seminar a concern with certain basic issues. The following summary attempts to bring out some of these general issues. It is based on the detailed and excellent discussion record prepared by the rapporteurs. They were: L. M. Khubchandani and Khema Tikku (First Session); Mushir-ul-Huq and S. N. Shukla (Second Session); A. Poddar and K. N. Sinha (Third Session); L. M. Khubchandani and J. A. Naik (Fourth Session); Ramchandra Gandhi and A. K. Saran (Fifth Session).

The discussion record had been carefully read, extensively annotated and coordinated by A K Saran. I have drawn from this record without further acknowledgement.

Discussions at the first two sessions were dominated by the related problems of relevance and commitment. There was almost total unanimity that a relevant social science must mean that the work of social scientists should serve the welfare of the people of the country at large and that commitment to this welfare is a value in itself. There was, however, considerable difference of opinion regarding how this commitment is best operationalized. Four different points of view seemed to emerge and these were labelled by one of the participants as "liberal, managerial, Marxist and moralist". For the sake of convenience this terminology is adopted here also.

The "liberal" viewpoint maintained that the best way in which social scientists can serve the interests of the country is by applying themselves to the description and analysis of traditional structures and on-going processes and by examining the implications of different courses of policy-guided action. The social scientist must adhere to the imperative of improvement in the quality of research and seek to serve his country through an honest performance of his professional role. The commitment to one's discipline is thus the social scientist's form of commitment to his country. A major strand in his commitment lies in his own personal value frame of reference: his conception of morality or his ideology. Many of his value judgments will have their roots in this sphere; it is important to recognize this and not to claim validity for them on other grounds. Social science does not issue ethically commanding directives.

In whatever manner one may arrange these loyalties in the course of discussion, in one's experience they are all intertwined and may even come into conflict with each other. To ensure that such conflicts are creative two things are essential: absolute integrity on the part of the social scientist and an atmosphere of free inquiry in the society. It must be recognized that different scholars may perceive their duty differently depending upon their situation. In this connection it is worthwhile to look at the way some of the founding fathers of social sciences in India—such as Ghurye, Radhakamal Mukerjee, D P Mukerji and N K Bose—conducted themselves as responsible social scientists. Various solutions were offered to the problem of how one may locate and define the interests of one's country, ranging from an appeal to one's personal philosophy to an examination of the Constitution of India. It was clear that all these solutions raised further problems.

The "managerial" viewpoint was a plea for a more activist role of the social scientist. What was needed, it was maintained, was a theory of "intervention" to determine what kinds of social intervention are effective under what conditions. The distinction between pure and applied research was described as a snare. If social scientists could be got interested in the chain of consequences of the knowledge which they made available to the society, the whole controversy centring round these dichotomies would immediately be seen as irrelevant.

According to the "Marxist" viewpoint the foregoing views were an example of bourgeois social science—at best irrelevant, at worst reactionary. Commitment to the country was a vague phrase; commitment to the Constitution a cloak for the preservation of the interests of the bourgeoisie; and commitment to one's academic discipline an evasion of one's social responsibility. Social science has a clear historical role—that

of helping all those forces in society which will ultimately destroy the privileges of the classes and recognize the interests of the masses.

A committed and relevant social science must engage in social criticism and it can hardly do this if it is engaged in trivial or peripheral studies such as those of kinship, caste and religion. In this context the claims of micro-studies and macro-studies were also examined. It was argued that it was not the size of the unit of study which was a relevant criterion of macro-sociology but the purposes of study: even the study of small villages had in the past provided insights into pan-Indian structures and processes. The "Marxists" expressed a preference for the macro-perspective and for the study of such themes as agrarian unrest, trade unionism and regional movements.

Also discussed in the light of the debate was the question of priorities in social research, particularly in respect of funding agencies, most notably the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). It was the opinion of some of the participants that the ICSSR should try to evolve a policy for the support of social research in areas about the importance of which there may be general agreement. The subject was not, however, pursued at the Seminar, though the "Marxists" underlined the importance of a clear-cut definition of priorities.

The fourth, viz. the "moralist", viewpoint was presented forcefully though only by a handful of people. It cut across the Marxist—non-Marxist debate and asserted that social science would remain completely irrelevant and uncommitted to anything human, properly so-called, unless it took a direct stand on moral problems, recognizing them as central to social science. If moral considerations are held irrelevant then we will have a "beyond human freedom and dignity" and mechanically behaviourist social science, which has been known in the past to serve fascist regimes. The only alternative was that the social science must acknowledge the legitimacy and primacy of moral philosophy. If moral knowledge was held beyond the realm of attainment, all social action would become trivialized and social science activity would be reduced to sophistry. A social science squarely founded upon the study of moral philosophy logically could not be value-neutral. For to acknowledge the legitimacy and primacy of moral philosophy was to acknowledge the moral obligation of investigating the nature of morality. In India, we must question the subjectivist account of morality characteristic of western liberal ideology as well as the historical-relativist account of morality, characteristic of communist ideology. But this only meant that inquiry into the nature of morality must constitute the heart of social science activity.

In the course of the above discussion many other points were raised and discussed. Thus, the implications of the use of term "social science" were pointed out, drawing attention to the atomization of social science research activity and warning against the loss of the holistic, i.e., the sociological perspective. Another major point that was raised, though not discussed at any length, was that of the nature of contemporary social change and the content of development. How did one reconcile a definition of development in terms of technological advance with the preservation of human freedom. Finally, it may be mentioned, several participants bemoaned the poor quality of social science research in India and even provided various explanations for this state of affairs.

The theme for discussions at the third session was "Organization and Management

of Social Science Education and Research". A fundamental guiding principle, it was maintained, was the inseparability of good teaching, wholesome research, and a concern with the utilization of the results of social research in the welfare of the people. To improve teaching, it was necessary to bring about reform in the organization of university departments with a view to rooting out "bossism", denying automatic promotion to inefficient teachers, and encouraging equalitarian relations between staff members. Also essential was the formulation of syllabuses in such a manner as to relate them, on the one hand, to the problems of the day and, on the other hand, to the latest advances in research all over the world. Teaching at Indian universities is always carried out under the shadow of irrelevance and obsolescence. The third important input into improved teaching would be a greater emphasis on seminars, tutorials and discussions, and a minimization of lecturing. The reliance on English as the medium of instruction was considered as an obstacle to communication by some of the participants.

Teaching departments rest on the quality of students and of teachers. The present drift of students into universities for the reason that they have nothing else to do was deplored. The importance of rationalizing the procedures of recruitment and promotion of teachers was also emphasized.

It was felt that the post-independence concern with research in India has had certain unfortunate results. Within university departments it has led to a downgrading of teaching and an unhealthy emphasis on research. At the same time, this concern has led to the growth of a large number of research centres at various levels with a hierarchy of their own. These elite research centres have proved harmful in as much as they have resulted in an internal brain-drain within the country. Attracted by better research facilities and higher emoluments, many scholars have left the universities. The elite institutions being concentrated in a few places, there has been a countrywide depletion of talent from regional universities and research centres.

A review of the policy of establishing research centres and a reexamination of their relationship to the universities was called for. It was generally agreed that a university is the only place where many disciplines exist and where scholars at different levels of their research careers are to be found. It is, therefore, at the universities alone that worthwhile inter-disciplinary work can be done and new talent located and nourished. Some of the participants also maintained that the social utility of research could best be judged at the universities. Hence the teacher-researcher was the best person who could improve the over-all academic standards and the intellectual climate in the country.

By contrast, research centres—even some of the best in the country—suffer from natural constraints. Being "single-focus" institutions their aims are narrow; being divorced from teaching, their potential as breeding-centres for talent is limited. One of the expectations had been that the research centres would set very high standards of work. This unfortunately has not turned out to be the case. For one thing, the centres have failed in recruiting only the best people; furthermore, the emphasis on results, which means frequent publication, compels people to rush through their work.

Another notable failure in the field of social science teaching and research mentioned in the course of discussions was that experienced at the Indian Institutes of Technology. The principal reasons for this were that the students did not readily appreciate the relevance of these studies and the teachers did not have a sense of belongingness. Many

teachers had, in fact, taken the first opportunity to move over to university departments of social sciences or to research centres. The failure to arouse the interest of students could partly be traced also to badly structured syllabuses.

Whether one is considering a university or a research centre, certain organizational problems have to be faced. It was pointed out that the basic requirements for the sound management of teaching and research institutions were five-fold : (i) suitable environment conducive to scholarly discussion and exchange unfettered by extraneous considerations of status; (ii) a sound, rational and honest reward/punishment system; (iii) a well-equipped support system which would include library, staff, research funds, and other facilities; (iv) commitment on the part of the concerned scholars; (v) autonomous administration.

Some of the participants felt that the growth of professional standards, of codes of conduct and of solidarity among research workers should also receive attention. In this connexion, it was pointed out, the impact of the results of research should be judged solely in terms of its quality and relevance rather than in terms of the prestige of the sponsoring institution or the status of the research worker.

A viewpoint, among several others, that was expressed in the course of the discussion was that the problems of organization and management of social science research and teaching were really secondary; what was primary was the social scientists' willingness to actually experience the social reality, which today was best described as "human degradation". If we pass this basic test, the problems of quality, relevance, productivity, management, etc., would turn out to be no problems at all. There was, thus, the imperative need of a thorough soul-searching by social scientists.

The fourth session was devoted to an examination of the development of social sciences in India. The growth and present state of research in the fields of political science, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, education, management, linguistics, etc., were discussed. In the process, the specific traditions and concerns of each of these disciplines were highlighted. Some general points that emerged may be mentioned here.

A major source of weakness in social science teaching and research in India was the result of the history and nature of the contact between India and the West. The dependence that characterizes the relations of a colony with its imperial power in the field of economic life is also characteristic of the intellectual condition of its intelligentsia. This at any rate has been the case in India. Some of the participants bemoaned this for a number of reasons. First, the socio-cultural conditions in India are so different from those in the West that the applicability and relevance of Western theories and models is always problematic. This was true in the nineteenth century and this is true now. Second, the acceptance or rejection of Western theories often has been influenced by extraneous considerations. This, it was suggested, is best illustrated by the Indian reaction, whether positive or negative to Marxism as an intellectual tradition. Third, there has been a striking lack of interest in the refinement and development of theoretical framework and of methodologies.

The overall result of this reliance on the intellectual efforts of Western scholars has been the irrelevance of social science research to the problems and the needs of the

country. The state of development, whether high or low, of a particular social science is not relevant in this context; this is borne out by the fact that the many sophisticated econometric models that have been fashionable in the country during the last twenty years or so have more often than not been unable to perform as well as their proponents had confidently proclaimed. The importance of socio-cultural specificity has been **demonstrated at much cost to the country.**

The resultant situation was described as one of "identity crisis" for the social sciences. Was social science research to be a disorganized, descriptive endeavour, with no roots in the soil, and without purpose? Or, was it to be systematized, analytical, original, innovative, and highly responsive to the needs of the country? There was unanimity among the participants that the latter course was the only one to be pursued. There was disagreement among them, however, as to whether the solution lies in a critical adoption of social science theories and models already developed elsewhere, and their further development, or whether we have to start from different premises than those on which the Western social sciences are based. Those holding the former view adhered to the position that there could only be a single social science (whether economics, sociology, political science or any other discipline), universal in terms of its aims, theories and methods, but specific in terms of the concrete problems it is called upon to deal with at particular times and in particular places. There could be Indian social sciences no more than there could be Indian natural or physical sciences. Others felt that this approach failed to face fundamental questions about the nature of social reality and of social science.

Several other dimensions of social science research in India came up for consideration. Thus, it was pointed out that, not merely had the development of theoretical and methodological tools been neglected, even many substantive problem-areas had been left uncultivated. There has been little work done on the phenomenon of regionalism in India or on the understanding of the problem of underdevelopment in the Third World. Area studies generally continue to be neglected. In many of these problem areas the importance of the interdisciplinary approach and of multivariability remains to be cultivated. Similarly, the exact scope and mutual relationship of micro and macro-studies, of meta-theory and theory, of theory and application remain to be worked out.

The above kinds of criticism notwithstanding, the participants also drew attention to the gains and advances registered by the social sciences in India since the advent of independence.

The fifth and last session of the Seminar took up for deliberation the subject of theory-building in the social sciences. In a sense, this session represented a continuation of the discussions at the fourth session. Compared to the other sessions, however, there was a minimum of reference to the Indian situation. Some participants did criticize the general lack of interest in theoretical contributions by Indians and the poverty of such contributions, while others argued that theory construction was no less dependent on historical circumstances than any other kind of social science research. But, in general, the discussion remained closely tied to such specific themes as :

Definition of theory; procedures of theory construction; purposes of theory construction; types (or levels) of theory; evaluation of theories; legitimacy of the notion of

utility in relation to theory; legitimacy of the derivation of prescriptions for problem-solving from theories; theory, predictability and control; theory and models; causality and control; the relevance of philosophical perspectives in conceptual clarification in social sciences; etc.

There was general agreement among the participants that the Seminar had been a very lively one and that it had revealed a multiplicity of viewpoint among Indian social scientists. The fact that such a thing was possible was a matter for gratification. It was obvious that, compared to several Asian countries, intellectual controversy was developing in India and this reflected credit both on the intellectuals themselves and on the wider socio-political environment. At the same time, it was obvious that controversies for their own sake can only be a socially wasteful and intellectually debilitating exercise. Tension must become productive, and some of the participants saw a promise of this at the Seminar.

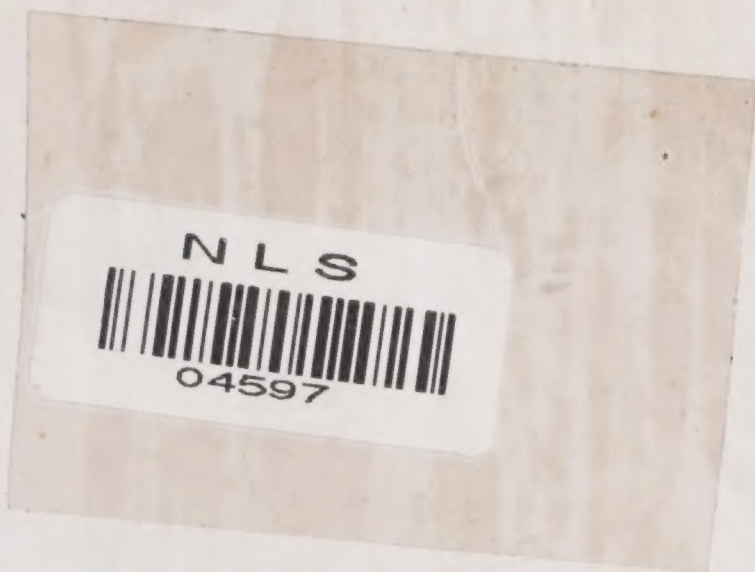
There were other participants, however, who felt that the Seminar had tended to be over-preoccupied with polemics and that the participants had generally failed to tackle basic issues even when these were raised. This was considered unfortunate, particularly because some of the leading social scientists of the country had been assembled at the Seminar.

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